

YOUTH CULTIVATING CHANGE

A photovoice project to lift the voices of youth.



The Food Literacy Project

The following researchers at the University of Louisville
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this photovoice project:

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Special thanks to the Youth Community Agriculture Program
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Danaee "Dragonfruit"
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Jasmine "Jalapeño"
Marissa "Mango"
Ruby "Radish"

What is Photovoice?

Photovoice is a "process by which people can identify, represent, and enhance their community through a specific photographic technique" (Wang & Burris, 1997). The photovoice principles involve 1) enabling people to record and reflect their community's strengths and concerns, 2) promote critical dialogue and knowledge about important issues through large and small group discussions of photographs, and 3) to reach policymakers. Photovoice is often used by community engaged researchers to shape and change communities through policy. Youth photovoice projects are one way to ensure youth voice is placed at the center of decision-making about issues directly affecting them.

Photovoice equips individuals with cameras to create photographic evidence and symbolic representations to offer insight, teach others about their experiences and help others see the world through their eyes.

“ Images contribute to how we see ourselves, how we define and relate to the world, and what we perceive as significant or different. The lesson an image teaches does not reside in its physical structure, but rather in how people interpret the image in question. ”

**CAROLYN C. WANG,
PHOTOVOICE
CREATOR/RESEARCHER**

Welcome!

Dear Friends:

Welcome to our photovoice project, Youth Cultivating Change. My fellow crew members and I are excited to share our journey of discovery with you. This project has helped us grow in so many ways. These photos, along with our reflections, express how the Food Literacy Project has impacted our community and us. It was exciting to use the art of photography as a way to share our experiences.

During photovoice, we found our voices, witnessed the growth of food we cultivated to nourish ourselves and our neighbors, and showcased how we worked to serve our community. Most importantly, this project captured the friendships we have developed while farming.

We are honored that you are going to see something that feels like a part of us. A picture really is worth a thousand words.

Sincerely,



Fathma "Fruit"
Community Food Leader
Youth Community Agriculture Program,



P.S. We have organized the photos and our reflections into the categories of community, leadership and justice to serve as guideposts as you journey into our world.

Visit foodliteracyproject.org/youth-cultivating-change to see this project in its digital format.

COMMUNITY



The Way My Coworkers Lift Me Up

This photo was taken after a long day of harvesting. I was hot and messy but everyone around me has smiles on their faces. It captured the moods my coworkers were in which impacts my life, because this job has connected me with people who see the bright side in things. We've grown together as people through YCAP. Even when I'm down my coworkers find a way to cheer me up.

Everyday Work (A Purpose)

This squash is something you will see about everyday on the farm. I really do love what this farm gives to my community! We really give our best effort to our work because we know how important a human's health is. I'm really glad YCAP is here.



Twister Family

This was taken on a YCAP second Saturday. Not many people showed up, but we persevered and enjoyed ourselves as a big farm family. This shows how YCAP impacted my life, because it gave me new friends who are there for me and people to grow with which is what YCAP is all about.

COMMUNITY

Life Skills

This is a dish we made with Maggie “Mushroom” when we were doing a cooking demo. These cooking demos make me appreciate the Food Literacy Project so much more, because we get to learn cooking skills while learning to cook new things. It demonstrates how this job is better than fast food and retail, because it teaches us life skills while also making sure we are happy and comfortable in our job. Other jobs do not care like our bosses do.



Food Creates Community

In this photo the kids are in a circle playing a farm name game. The kids are all friends, even if they didn't know each other before Field-to-Fork Club! I remember kids sharing seeds and planting together. It was truly beautiful. Kids start the program in 3rd grade and most return until 5th grade. One kid that talked to me told me he was going to miss it.

COMMUNITY



This was one of our first days back at the spring job, and we were working with members of our community. I couldn't have any of them in the picture because there's no way I could get their consent, but I wanted to show that we actually do work with the community. We were clipping trees. That's why we had the big cutter thingies; the snips in our hand. We had volunteers sign up, and they helped us. They mostly signed up to gain information, and some of them asked questions and stuff like that, so it felt good to talk to other people from the community that liked to garden and plant too. The Food Literacy Project gives us opportunities to work with other people. Even our school doesn't do stuff like that, so I feel like we get more opportunities through the Food Literacy Project. That shows through this picture. We are fighting really hard to keep the farm, and we need to find a permanent home.



Feeding the Community

When harvesting vegetables on the farm we typically harvest a lot. As a small crew even if we each take some of the vegetables we harvested, there is a lot left over. With the extra vegetables, we give it to different places that help food insecure people. This box of cucumbers, for example, went to Feed the West a program that delivers food to people who live in the west end that don't have access to a sustainable food source.

COMMUNITY

The Joys of Work

Even though it was cold, I was still happy. I was singing, and it was just a really happy day at work. It connects to the Food Literacy Project, because it shows how the Food Literacy Project is a big family. We don't have conflicts that much, and we enjoy what we do. At the end of the day, no matter how hard it was or how much we smell like garlic, we still enjoy it.



It was the last day, and people were... I was sad, I'm not going to lie. I was sad, because I wouldn't have work anymore. That's the only thing that keeps me occupied and I have fun doing it, so I was sad that it had to end for the fall. I think it goes back on the we're a big family aspect. It's not just a job to me. It's somewhere where I can be happy and hang out with my friends. I really felt the Food Literacy Project actually cares about us, because they paid for that bill. I hadn't paid for nothing. They paid for that and they care about us, because they were really saying how they were going to miss us.

COMMUNITY

Finally Famous

It made me think about how gratifying farm work is, because on the table behind us, there's all the stuff that we had picked, and there was a market set up at the community meal. And at the community meal, everyone was like, "Let's take a picture!" It showed how gratifying being a farmer is. Well, it shows that farming in itself is a community, because in the picture, not all of us had known each other at the beginning of the



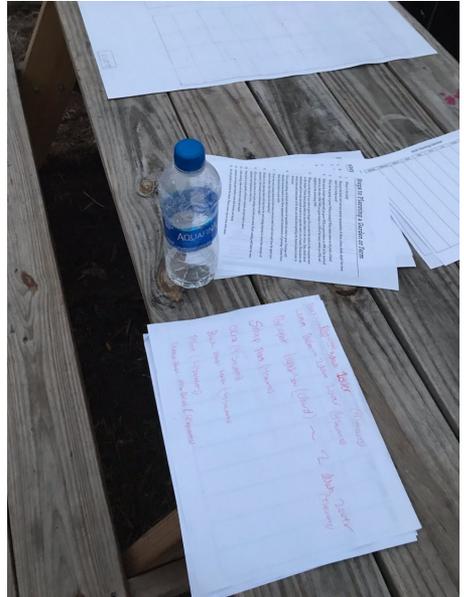
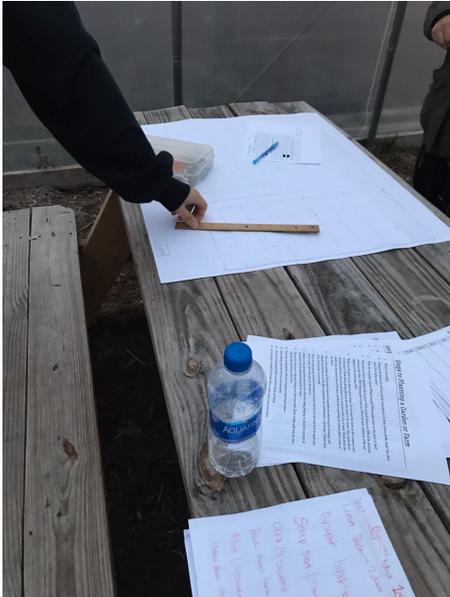
summer, and this was the last day, and all of us are friends. We're young, and people like to see young people changing, so it helps other people see how we can change things too. This particular job was only seven weeks, but it made the cover of a magazine, and people were proud of what we did. People we didn't even know were proud of what we did, so I wanted people to see it. I feel like policy makers need to hear about it, because not everyone knows about stuff that we do, and I feel like there should be more non-profits, like the Food Literacy Project. And obviously, we get our money through grants and things, and policy makers are what can shine a light on the things that we do, which can help us, but also help other non-profits that work towards youth.



The Strawberry in The Learning Garden

The learning garden holds a very special place in my heart. An image of little kids running around and picking tomatoes and smiling comes to my mind when I think of the learning garden. Now the kids can enjoy goodies too! My co-workers and I worked very hard on that learning garden and to be able to share it with other people makes me very happy. The learning garden gives everyone in the farm a sense of community and friendship.

LEADERSHIP



The reason why I picked these pictures is because we were talking about planning for the learning garden, and we were planning it ourselves. This is the first time we ever planned it ourselves. It made me feel really happy and responsible, because I was planning it out and I was the leader in the group that I was with. The learning garden is for when the little kids come over. And so, the learning garden is to teach them about the different vegetables, and some of the vegetables are common, but some of them are not. We picked a lemon balm, and I don't think every kid would know what lemon balm is, and number one, it smells nice, so they'll be drawn to it and stuff like that, and we're teaching them about different things that they haven't seen before.

The way I planned it out was... It has a visual representation, so when the plants come up, they have different colors that we catch the public's eye when they come over, and I feel like the colors that we picked, and the stuff that we picked, will make the people happy to see it. You have to be able to measure it out, because some of the vegetables need spaces, while other vegetables don't. And also, if you put a root and a root together, it's probably not going to grow as well, because they're both competing against each other. So, we had to actually plan it out.

LEADERSHIP



Vegetables Make Kids Happy!

My first photo was a photo of a few kids cutting vegetables, which went into the sauce we made at Field to Fork Club at Wellington Elementary School. Every week we teach the kids how to make

healthy recipes with the vegetables we grow and give to them every Thursday! The kids at Wellington Elementary School thoroughly enjoy cooking with our vegetables and making delicious recipes. Some kids are skeptical about eating vegetables, but they always end up liking it.

The second photo is of the finished product of the sauce and was delicious. You can see the veggies and can tell it's fresh.



The last photo of the sequence is the vegetables they got to take home and some whole wheat flour. They can use these ingredients to make the recipe at home. These photos made me really happy, because it is the first step to knowing how to nourish your body. Kids say vegetables are “gross” or “nasty,” but we taught them how to enjoy vegetables! The kids loved our vegetable pasta!

LEADERSHIP



“ I didn't have this kind of club in my elementary school, so to see them try new vegetables and learn about being healthy is amazing.”

- Fathma "Fruit"
2019 YCAP Crew Member

This picture shows how important the work that the food literacy project is. Most elementary schools didn't have Field-to-Fork Club, and I definitely didn't. Kids deserve this though. It's important to teach kids how to grow and cook different vegetables and we encourage all of the kids to try the food that we cook together. I feel like there needs to be more organizations or more money being put into clubs like, this because it creates learning opportunities for young kids.



Learning and Connecting

I chose this photo because it shows how the food literacy project teaches us so much. Also, it connects us to even more opportunities to learn. I remember Jamie Burghardt teaching us about the Waterfront Botanical Gardens, and he even gave us tips on our own gardens and tips for the farm. One thing I remember was him telling us to ask our local coffeeshop for coffee grounds to give nutrients to our plants. It is nice talking to someone so passionate about our environment.

LEADERSHIP



Strawberries

This berry etc., and other produce gives meaning to my community on this learning garden, because children come here to try new experiences in food which makes them aware that there is more to food than chips.

Veggie YCAP

Market life on Thursdays helps my community to have more options in their diet. Especially for those who have no access to healthy food. Plus we have many variety of options that most markets don't.



LEADERSHIP

Tomato Heart

The tomatoes are a representation of the community's health. Everyone's heart starts off nice, juicy, sweet and red! But with the unhealthy corporation we eat and get deceived by rots this heart and the tomatoes. Especially at a young age, we need to encourage these health habits and get other kids and even adults in fruits and veggies and that's what YCAP's purpose is.



Celosia Brain Flower (Discoveries and Growth)

This is a representation of me looking YCAP for the first time, or for anyone to anything. For me, everyday since the summer was always something new. Which goes for this flower as well as every other task people might take. This flower is a Celosia Brain Flower, my father grew it and told me about it. Overall it's a message of me growing during YCAP.



LEADERSHIP

Bouquet of Kale

You see the product where... Seeing it from the start to end, it was really... Made me happy and grateful. With the Food Literacy Project, it shows you how much we see things from start to finish, and how we influence and change the mind of teenagers and little kids too. When little kids have their garden at their school, when they see it from start to finish, they think it's really cool and it makes them happy.



How the Field-to-Fork Dinner Impacted Me

This photo impacted my life because it was my first time speaking in front of a big amount of people. I got the opportunity to share my voice and how YCAP connected me to different people in my community.

LEADERSHIP

Growing with the Kale

This photo is just a representation of how YCAP has impacted me as a person. Since I know how to grow things now, and I have a new understanding of nutrition, vegetables, and cooking and stuff like that. I think I started last summer, I guess, and now I can grow almost anything. I know how to plant things. Anything you give me, I think I could grow it. I know how to cook with it. I work with a lot of people from my community.

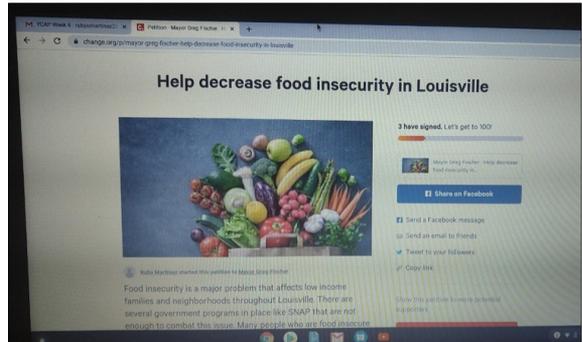


I think they can say things about how it can change you too. We deal with not just my community but communities all around. You know what I mean? I feel like literally YCAP changes lives, because they hired people from the community and you're getting paid to better your health, your food choices and stuff like that. And that impacts the community because children or teenagers our age could use it. I think people, when they first hear that it's just a farm job, they do this double take, but it's so much more than that. And the fact that you can get paid to better yourself, I think so many teens could like in lower income neighborhoods like ours, especially because they give us vegetables to take home every week to cook with. So I feel like it would be a good job to just learn. Well, it's different because usually teenagers, we just work in fast food and stuff. And you're at work, you're probably going to snack on a McDougle or fries and then that's not good for you. You know? In our job here, we literally cook healthy delicious foods all the time. And we get this new knowledge of it and we take vegetables home. Sometimes I bring cucumbers over to my mom, and she loves them. We don't get all that at a fast food restaurant. Well, I can now grow things. I can spread it on, I want to eat better, just add more vegetables into my diet, add more fruits. Get my stuff from farms, because farm grown is better. I care more about the farmer's markets because I understand the process and everything just like I have this better understanding and I'll be able to pass that on in the future. I've learned and grown over because of this job. It's right here in not a rural area. We're in the middle of civilization. We're not in far out. We're right in the middle of a community, and that it can be done anywhere, I guess.

JUSTICE

The Change I Want to See

The reason why I chose these photos and put them together is because I want to show what I see most of the time in my city compared to what I think I should see more often than not, which is farms, healthy habits, and people who care and work on the land. I want to see a world where there are more farms than fast food, where's there's more healthy than unhealthy.



Making Change

This is a petition that I created to help with food insecurity in Louisville. This picture represents power, because anyone within Louisville and our country has the power to change things that they are unhappy about within their community, whether that's through creating a petition online like I did or contacting their representative. This picture also represents initiative, because in order to use your power you have to take initiative and let people know what needs to change.

JUSTICE



Most of these photos is from the botanical garden down there. It was very nice. I took a picture of it to let people know about the garden. I don't have nothing like this in my community, because there's literally nothing that we can explore like this. So I took it because I really admired it, and I really want one in my community. There was people down there that was actually planting while I was going through. They had little t-shirts like we do. They also have a food crop area for the certain foods that they have. They have that separated. I happened to notice that there was a bunch of basil, a bunch of okra, a bunch of squash, eggplants, peppers, chili peppers. There was so much stuff out there. So I happened to notice it, so this relates to the YCAP because we do the same thing. Like we all plant similar things. We wear the same t-shirts and be out in that heat. They seemed like they cared about what people eat.

Fresh Harvest

While working as a part of YCAP I have learned a lot. I have been more excited to try new things and learn new recipes with the fresh food that we harvest. I have seen the process of planting and harvesting different vegetables. I have also learned about food insecurity and have thought about different ways to help decrease food insecurity in Louisville.



JUSTICE

This is My Community

YCAP impacts my community because we picked up all this trash and made it a better area. Maybe our council person, I know she leads trash pickup, but just to put it out there more that you can't just litter everywhere and stuff like that. When we pick up trash, we had to throw it away at the Save-A-Lot dumpster. So they weren't really trash cans. Maybe if people see this picture, they'll see that not everyone, we don't have to normalize it,

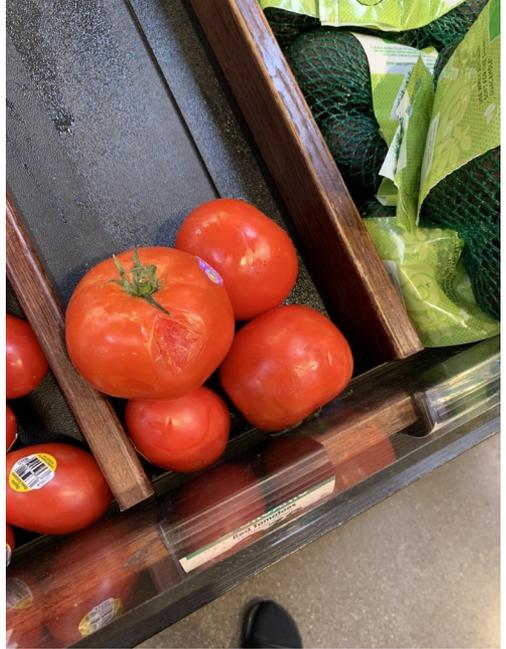


and it doesn't have to be okay. Some people want their community not to look like that, and if they see us out there, working on it and stuff like that, then maybe they'll think differently about the next time they want to litter or something. Just clean, just the fact that you can see like the side of the grass is filled with trash, and no one wants to look at that. I don't know anyone who wants their community to look like that. I just thought we could do this all the time, and the trash just keeps coming back. So I just thought it would be an example of, show people that this isn't okay, and that people actually want to clean it up. So maybe people will see how we like impact that community, because we do things for our community. Plus during this time, this pandemic, you never know, random people going out, picking up stuff, and for all we can know, like there could be coronavirus on it or something like that. We can get sick from picking up this trash and germs and stuff. So I feel like people just should, if they see a trash can, they should just throw it away. If they don't see a trash can at that moment, then they should wait, hold their trash until they find a trash can. And the mayor can put more trash cans out. That could be something that we could request. Getting more trash cans around the community.

JUSTICE

Everyday Injustice

The reason I chose this picture to write about is because I want to show what it's like looking for fresh fruits and vegetables in a grocery store located in a neighborhood like mine. They still sell us rotten and beat up vegetables just to get home and be uneatable. This is unfair to the hardworking people who spend their money to feed their family and barely have the resources to do so.



A policy should be put in place to prevent this not just for richer/ less “urban” people but everyone. This represents injustice in a lot of ways. For one, food injustice for people like me and my family who go to the grocery store to buy fresh fruits and vegetables that we can actually eat and can't find. That's one injustice. Another one is the people who didn't even notice, bought the fruit and vegetable, went home and couldn't eat it because it was rotten when they got home. It's injustice for the kids who didn't ask for this, who still have to eat tonight but can't. So, yeah. Injustice in a whole lot of ways. I just wanted people to see that it's not just talk. It's not just in our head. It's not just us picking a fight. It's real life. It really happens every single day. And even if you're not directly affected by it, it should still be an issue for you that there are kids that can't eat sometimes, or that parents that can't afford stuff like this or parents that can afford stuff like this, but don't get the right products or right produce because of stuff like this.

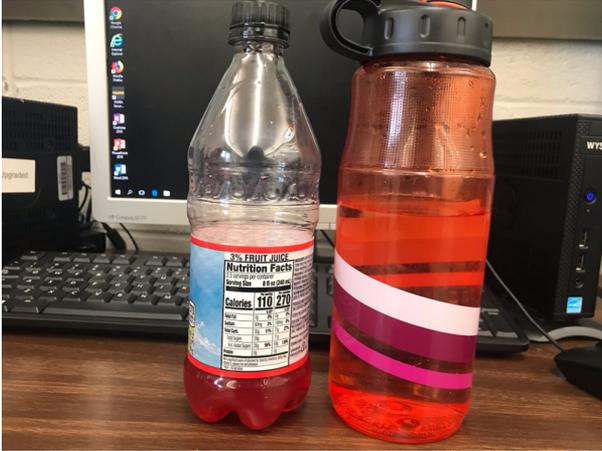
JUSTICE

We were driving down Dixie Highway, and we happened to see this stand on the side of the road. It was a guy. He had so much other stuff. So we stopped because I wanted some cucumbers, and some tomatoes, and cantaloupe. He was talking to me, and I was



telling him about the farm. He asked where it was located and I was telling him where it was and he said, "Okay, okay." He told me about his... He said he got his own farm. That's how he makes this produce. He said it was in his backyard or something. And so we just had a conversation about produce and stuff. Before this whole coronavirus broke out, we used to show at a fresh market and we'd give it to people. He made it affordable on purpose. He told me he made it affordable on purpose because he would like people to experience just like... He told me that. Do you see him? He made it affordable to anybody to help.

JUSTICE



I feel like the Food Literacy Project wants to educate people more than anything. Even more than farming and stuff. There's a movement where we want people to be educated, because then they'll know where their food comes from and stuff like that. I feel like not a lot of people are educated. People in my community... They mostly sell drinks and stuff in our cafeteria, and they have one thing of water, and the rest is soda. Not a lot of people in our community know about the effects of things that are going into our body. And those other soft drinks that they sell us are very large and stuff, and those water bottles that they also sell are very, very small. And much more expensive than the others. We learned about how they sell snacks at school and stuff like that to have our loyalty. We learned about that over the fall, how... They don't sell it for money, but they sell it for us to see it, and we're loyal to that brand. If you see Doritos at school, and you buy them, because you're hungry, because you're not going to eat the school food, then you're loyal to that brand. So, we also learned about that, which was from the Food Literacy Project.

JUSTICE

Cheated

Watermelon: This was the inside of a Taco Bell by St. Matthews it was the best one I had ever seen. The Taco Bell I go to, there's trash outside, the trash inside, the trash cans filling up. You can tell that there's not money put into the Taco Bell in my neighborhood. IYCAP has made me think more closely and into depth about how this isn't okay. Why is it so nice out here, and why can't we have the



same things? I don't know. I guess there's just more money out in St. Matthews. We all know how pretty it is, and there's all these stores around there. There's a Whole Foods. I've never even been to a Whole Foods. Yeah. There's not a lot of black people, so... Chico: Because basically white privilege. Watermelon: I mean, it just angers me so much because I went in there, and I was like, "Wow. It's like so beautiful here." Why can't I say that in my own neighborhood? Why can't my neighborhood be beautiful too. Before I would just be like, "Oh, it's St. Matthew's." Of course everything out here is nice. Over the weeks we've talked about it, and you realize it's stupid, and that it's racially wrong. It's just the money they put into like white everything is just wrong. They've opened my eyes, and I have a better perspective.

JUSTICE

I just thought people should know how YCAP has opened my eyes, and how it impacts me too, because it made me feel some type of way. It made me feel like, imagine a little kid who's like, "Why is everything so nice out here? Why's my community so bad, not nice, like this." I don't want anyone to feel differently because, "Oh, there's a lot of white people out here. We shouldn't have to think that. We shouldn't have to. I think that everyone could use an eye



opener, just like I got, and maybe they'll see, they'll start realizing these things too. And then, we could all advocate for change and more money in predominantly black neighborhoods. We could really do something about it instead of just getting angry and then getting over it, because I don't want to get over it. I want people to feel how I feel, to see what I see. Well, firstly, I'd start with maybe comparing different things in each neighborhood and show them that like, "Oh, this was predominantly white. This was predominantly black." Just to show that it really is a thing. Just so it opened people's eyes about, go back to history and just show people how much stuff hasn't changed.

I feel like they just stereotype everybody in one group. I feel like they just see everybody as the same in the neighborhood, so basically saying everybody's not the same way. Everybody has different intentions. Everybody's not going to steal. Everybody's not going to ruin the store or whatever you're going to go into. Everybody's not going to damage the property. I know there might be some people out there, but not everybody's going to do that.

JUSTICE



I feel like public schools don't have access to good food, even though we're supposed to, that's the policy, but it's not... Everything's not what it seems it should be, because those strawberries were frozen. They weren't real. They were frozen, you could tell, and the taco meat was... That doesn't even look appetizing, and I feel like we deserve better, even though we go to a public school. Well, everyone that we know goes to a public school, and this is what JCPS kids are getting fed. This is what the guidelines are to a serving of fruit. That's not even fruit at this point. The strawberries don't look good. They're usually very soggy and very old. The food we get isn't nourishing or filling. I would just force myself to eat, because I need to eat something. I feel like when people think of farmers and stuff like that, they think of... You know how they work on the field and stuff? But that's not what the Food Literacy Project does. We also learn about food, and nutrition, and things like that, and over the fall, we learned about how this isn't proper nutrition. We watched documentaries, and we learned a lot. It really educated us on what we actually deserve, and this isn't it. And I feel like not everyone at JCPS can speak, because first of all, no one feels like they have a voice. I know before this, I wasn't... Who am I going to tell? But now, I'm talking about it. I feel like everyone needs to see it, just because not everyone knows what we have to eat, and then they wonder, why are our test grades so bad, and why is this, and why are kids having low energy? Well, this is why. But for some kids when they come to school, this is all that they get to eat. They don't eat at home. They come to school because they... School has meals. It's their only choice.



The Food Literacy Project

Vision

A healthy and equitable community, where people and places thrive.

Mission

Youth transforming their communities through food, farming, and the land.

The Food Literacy Project strives to advance equity and increase belonging among traditionally excluded and marginalized populations. We address gaps in knowledge, experience, and access to empower young people, their families, and neighbors urgently in need of positive interaction with and regular access to healthful foods. Youth become change agents, promoting healthy foodways and environmental sustainability in their families, schools, and communities. We believe food justice is social justice.

Values



ENERGY: We are bold and inspired by our community.



ROOTS: We are grounded and purposeful, connected with people and dedicated to sustainably addressing community needs.



DISCOVERY: We embrace the joy of learning by doing.



CULTIVATION: We bring great care to our work and relationships; we nourish growth in our community, and in turn, are nourished ourselves.



ABUNDANCE: We leverage our community's diverse assets to achieve personal and social change.



JUSTICE: We pursue fairness and equity.

We rely on support from the community to sustain and grow our efforts.



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