

# SOYL Summer Program Report 2011

## Sustainable Opportunities for Youth Leadership (SOYL)



- I. Program Overview**
- II. Program Highlights**
- III. New Initiatives**
- IV. Staff**
- V. Thank you to Community Partners**
- VI. Thank you to Funding Partners**

### **I. Program Overview**

Sustainable Opportunities for Youth Leadership (SOYL) Summer Internship was piloted by the UBC Faculty of Education's Intergenerational Landed Learning Project (ILLP) in 2010 to cultivate environmental leadership skills in adolescents, promote a sustainable local food system, and advance sustainable food production through gardening at schools. During the pilot summer, eight secondary students from four secondary schools built raised garden beds and planted, transplanted, harvested, sold, donated, cooked and ate produce from their school gardens.

During summer 2011, the second group of SOYL interns maintained and advanced their school gardens through construction and growing projects. From July 11, 2011 until August 19, 2011, seven Vancouver youth participated in the SOYL Internship, cultivating their leadership and gardening skills while promoting local food security and taking food production to the next level at their schools.

#### Participants

The seven youth interns, ages 13-17, represent four Vancouver Public Schools in different regions of the city:

- Britannia Secondary School
- Sir Winston Churchill Secondary School
- David Thompson Secondary School
- Vancouver Technical Secondary School



#### Impact

Over the course of the six week, 25 hour per week internship, the youth contributed a combined total of 800 volunteer hours in maintaining to maintaining school gardens and advancing local food systems! Through the work of SOYL interns, thousands of students and teachers at participating schools have vibrant school gardens and working compost systems in which to learn, grow food, and participate in a more sustainable future. In addition, 800 disadvantaged people living in the downtown east side ate healthy meals through SOYL donations to the Food Bank and meals prepared for the Portland Hotel Society, and 20 disabled gardeners now have wheelchair access to a beautiful farm

**More information and photos from the summer can be found on our Blog**

<http://soylprogram.wordpress.com/>



# SOYL Summer Program Report 2011

## Sustainable Opportunities for Youth Leadership (SOYL)

### II. Program Highlights

#### FOOD SYSTEM WORKSHOPS

Throughout the summer, SOYL interns investigated how their consumer and career choices can support sustainable local food systems. Every Monday they participated in a hands-on workshop to explore the complexities of our global and local food systems, following our food from production and distribution to waste management and resource renewal.



Mapping the conventional and local food system

#### SERVICE LEARNING

Each Thursday, interns put their learning into action by visiting and contributing to organizations that play important roles in our local food system. They also connected with community leaders who serve as role models and mentors, helping interns learn how to create a healthy, just, and environmentally sustainable food system.

#### Local, Organic Food Production



Pea harvest @ UBC Farm



Beekeeping with the EYA



Backyard chicken care @ Daily Eggs

#### Traditional Food Processing



Kneading bread dough



Canning strawberry jam



Making fermented sauerkraut





# SOYL Summer Program Report 2011

## Sustainable Opportunities for Youth Leadership (SOYL)

### Equitable Access and Distribution:

Richmond Fruit Tree Project, Portland Hotel Society (PHS), and SOLEfood Urban Farm



Harvesting for the food bank



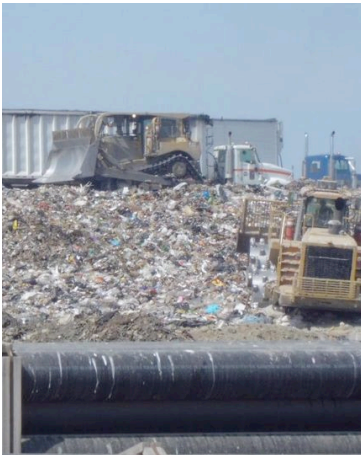
Preparing meals for PHS Residents



Thinning basil at SOLEfood gardens

### Waste Management and Resource Renewal:

Vancouver Landfill and Burns Bog



Garbage mountain



Composting of city yard trimmings



Picking native berries in the peat bog



## SOYL Summer Program Report 2011

### Sustainable Opportunities for Youth Leadership (SOYL)

#### SCHOOL GARDEN PROJECTS

Each week SOYL interns rotated together through their four schools, spending one day a week managing each school garden and collaborating with neighbourhood-based food system projects.



Assembling cold-frames

#### Vancouver Technical Secondary School

In 2011 SOYL interns spent their Mondays at Vancouver Technical Secondary School where they built upon the work of 2010 SOYL interns who had constructed eight raised garden beds. With the support of Fresh Roots Urban Farm, 2011 SOYL interns constructed four cold frames to extend the growing season into the school year. They grew crops for early autumn harvest and learned how to manage the irrigation of garden crops and trees.

#### Churchill Secondary School

In 2011 SOYL interns, spent Tuesdays at Churchill Secondary School, furthering the work of 2010 interns who managed three small food gardens. The 2011 interns dismantled the three small gardens beds to build a larger (7.5m x 2m) “lasagna garden”. They used wheelbarrows, shovels, and rakes to add layers of organic materials (cardboard, city compost, unfinished school compost, coffee grounds, coffee chaff, dried grass, etc...) and planted cover crop that will break down into a rich soil. Expanding the garden allows SOYL youth and other Churchill students to experiment with ways to build nutrient-rich soil, increases the space for growing crops for student consumption, and creates a school year learning space for students from François Clark’s Leadership classes.



Shoveling a compost layer for the lasagna garden.





## SOYL Summer Program Report 2011

### Sustainable Opportunities for Youth Leadership (SOYL)



Preparing the wheelchair accessible pathway

#### Farmers on 57<sup>th</sup>

Each Tuesday interns also spent half a day supporting and learning from the *Farmers on 57<sup>th</sup>* garden project at the Pearson Rehabilitation Centre. They gained valuable hands-on experience in community-based food production, including constructing a wheelchair-accessible pathway, tool sharpening, pest management, managing compost and making compost tea, installing irrigation, and direct seeding with a seeder.

#### Britannia Secondary School

Each Wednesday, SOYL interns stewarded the six raised gardens that had been built by 2010 SOYL summer interns and planted by Britannia students during the school year.

The interns seeded salad greens, peas, and root crops; transplanted leeks, celery, kale, and herbs; and staked tomatoes. They screened and applied compost to fertilize the gardens and kept the gardens watered. Interns also collaborated with Ian Marcuse of Grandview-Woodlands Food Connection to build a 3-bin compost system for school food waste that has been placed on a second garden site and is used throughout the school year.



The completed 3-bin compost system!

#### Grandview/ɥuqinak'uuh Elementary School



Selling produce at our Youth Grower's Market

On two Wednesdays, interns also helped with garden maintenance and harvesting at Grandview/ɥuqinak'uuh Elementary School. They washed and prepared fresh produce from Grandview and the four SOYL secondary schools, and brought the food to their own Youth Growers' Markets at the Britannia Community Centre. Through planning and managing the markets, the youth gained organizational skills, developed confidence and clarity in speaking with the public, handled money, and earned \$200.



## SOYL Summer Program Report 2011

### Sustainable Opportunities for Youth Leadership (SOYL)



Transplanting in the greenhouse

#### David Thompson Secondary School

On Fridays, SOYL interns raised crops for autumn harvest in seven raised-garden beds in David Thompson's courtyard and grew heat-loving crops in the greenhouse. They learned to monitor and manage the temperature, moisture, and pests within the greenhouse. They also mixed their own potting soil and soil amendment.

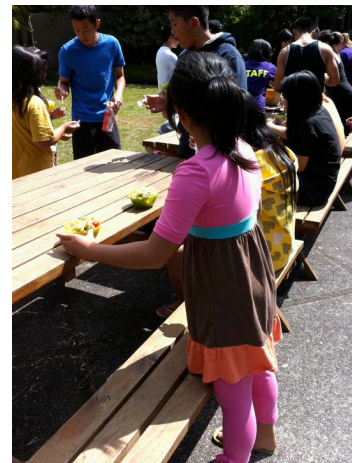
The interns developed and ran a very successful Seed to Table workshop at David Thompson for children from the South Vancouver Neighborhood House. During the workshop SOYL youth taught 25 elementary-aged children how to save seed, make biodegradable paper pots, harvest garden crops, and prepare salads and sauces from the garden.



Planting kale seed in paper pots



Harvesting potatoes



Eating lunch made from the garden!

### III. New Initiatives

SOYL is developing a model for mentorship between university students with interest and expertise in sustainable food systems and secondary students in Vancouver public schools. Beginning in September 2011, 7 UBC students embarked on a collaborative directed study to explore and develop skills and knowledge, organizational infrastructure, and programming to support SOYL interns and other secondary students in cultivating environmental leadership.

Between September and November 2011, the UBC mentors offered three participatory workshops for secondary youth leaders engaged in food and garden leadership. The themes were seed saving, public speaking, and integrating local food in school cafeterias. These workshops have become increasingly popular with secondary students and attendance increased five-fold by the final workshop. Mentors will offer additional support directly to schools participating in the SOYL internship January-March 2012.





## **SOYL Summer Program Report 2011**

### **Sustainable Opportunities for Youth Leadership (SOYL)**

#### **IV. Staff**

Stacy Friedman, program coordinator, facilitates garden-based education through the Faculty of Education at UBC. Stacy enjoys collaborating with youth, teachers, and community members to explore and produce healthy food as a means to healthy bodies, ecosystems, and communities.

Teresa Ritemann completed her B.Sc in Global Resource Systems at UBC in 2011 and is currently working on her masters in urban planning at Ryerson University, focusing on food security and community development. Teresa put her skills and passions to work as the garden coordinator for the SOYL Internship 2011.

Kevin Cooper is a cofounder of Shift: Urban Cargo Delivery and former Garden Coordinator for the SOYL Program. This summer he facilitated weekly interactive food systems workshop for SOYL interns.

#### **V. Thank you to Community Partners**

Thank you to the many individuals and community organizations that donated time and resources to support SOYL interns and school gardens.

- Matthew Kemshaw, Environmental Youth Alliance
- Jen Rashleigh, Karen Ageson, and Tessa Wetherill, Farmers on 57<sup>th</sup> at the George Pearson Centre
- Ilana Labow and Christoph Miles, Fresh Roots Urban Farm
- Ian Marcuse, Grandview Woodland Food Connection
- Mike Bodnar, Portland Hotel Society
- Arzeena Hamir, Richmond Fruit Tree Project
- Ian Lai, Richmond Schoolyard Society
- Seann Dory, SOLEfood
- Vancouver Landfill

#### **VI. Thank you to Funding Partners**

We are extremely grateful to our generous donors without whom the SOYL Internship would not have been possible!

- Coast Capital Savings
- [Think&EatGreen@School](#), UBC Faculty of Land and Food Systems
- Home Depot
- Magnet Home Hardware
- Rona Home and Garden
- Southlands Nursery

