I'm making a bet. In 10 years, Hartford will be the buzz of Connecticut. It will be one of the Northeast's standout cities. Our city is moving in the right direction, but I'm reminded today to stay grounded. At KNOX, we ensure each and every project is backed by the community. Where possible, we ensure the community leads with KNOX's expertise filling in the gaps. So where do Hartford's rising tide and community leadership connect?

KNOX created 13 jobs for Hartford residents in partnership with the city through citywide reforestation efforts and our partnership with the Connecticut PGA at Goodwin Park Golf Course. Our community gardeners run micro-businesses at partnering farm-ers markets. If you haven't tasted Miss Lola's callaloo or the wonderful variety of Caribbean crops that Sal grows - you are missing out, my friend.

So, how do we transition community em-powerment into true community ownership? At KNOX, like everything else, it starts with the people. We're currently recruiting 8 teams of community gardeners to become farmers. That's right. True urban farmers growing true ethnic crops.

The project is called Hartford Green House-quarters, and it's just the tip of the root system. We seek investment from friends old and new. KNOX's home at 75 Laurel Street will soon be redesigned into an urban oasis. We will announce the project more formally soon. In the meantime, know we treasure you and everyone that makes Hartford a greener, healthier, and more livable city.

KNOX Welcomes Emily Petersen as new Community Outreach Associate

Originally from Mundelein, Illinois, Emily joined KNOX after a year with Public Allies designing and teaching nutrition and physical activity classes in Hartford's schools. Before that, Emily spent a year teaching and living in Wuhan, China. Now the Community Outreach Associate at KNOX, Inc., Emily is taking over the management of the community gardens, as well as leading the development of educational programming.

Change a Life.
Invest in Hartford's future workforce.
Help us raise $20,000 in the month of December.
Make a gift today!

KNOX and the City received a grant to support the restoration of Hartford's urban forest from American Forests, a national nonprofit organization. Hartford joins 8 other cities sharing the title of “Releaf City” including Atlanta, Nashville, and Detroit.

The Releaf program includes three key parts: urban forest assessment, restoration, and outreach and education. KNOX and American Forests will begin work with Davey Resource Group, an urban forest consulting agency, to map the city’s trees and determine what areas suffer from lack of canopy. The program will include recommendations for plantings to improve air quality and reduce asthma-causing particles in the air. Hartford is plagued with one of the highest asthma rates in the country due to high levels of indoor and outdoor pollution.

Hartford named newest “Releaf” City

KNOX will plant 100 trees based on the recommendations as well as conduct community outreach teaching city residents about how trees improve air quality.

A previous survey of Hartford's tree canopy was conducted in partnership with Bank of America, the City of Hartford, CT DEEP and the University of Vermont in 2008. However, much has changed in the past few years to Hartford's canopy after the 2011 snowstorms and Hurricane Sandy resulted in the loss of over 4,000 trees in the city. The new survey will show the health of the city's urban forest and provide a scientifically determined planting goal for the next decade. Special thanks to Bank of America for funding this program nationally and supporting our efforts locally.

The staff, board, and KNOX community will miss her friendship and leadership. We wish you a happy retirement, Charmaine!
The Charles Nelson Robinson Fund supports the transition of 15 Hartford youth into long-term employment and a better life through our Green Crew AmeriCorps program.

The City of Hartford is one of KNOX’s strongest partners, thanks to the green intuition of Mayor Pedro Segarra, and deserves multiple thank you’s. They support each and every one of KNOX’s initiatives including graffiti removal, our workforce development program, Trees for Hartford Neighborhoods, and KNOX’s golf course crew. The city granted KNOX a Community Development Block Grant for the Green Crew program as well.

The Ensworth Charitable Foundation continues its supports of the award-winning Green Crew AmeriCorps programs. Members complete a year-round green jobs training program where they learn all the horticultural and life skills needed to be employed in the landscaping industry.

The Fisher Foundation is passionate about job training for Hartford’s young adults and will support the Green Crew AmeriCorps program again for 2014-15.

Garden Club of Hartford has commissioned a new garden pavilion under construction currently at the Earle Street Community Garden.

J. Walton Bissell Foundation is a generous supporter of KNOX’s workforce development program and strongly committed to a better future for these young Hartford residents.

Keep America Beautiful in partnership with UPS awarded KNOX a grant to plant 5 trees in Goodwin Park and 10 new trees in Rocky Ridge Park.

Keep America Beautiful & Bud Light sponsored a volunteer event called “Do Good. Have Fun.” to clean up and plant flowers along Hartford's beautiful riverfront.

Lakin Tire East, Inc. in West Haven donated 800 gardening gloves – a much needed resource during our volunteer events!

Lincoln Financial Foundation reaffirmed their support of KNOX’s award-winning Green Crew AmeriCorps program through a workforce development grant. This is their third consecutive year of major support.

KNOX was selected as one of the winners of the 10 for 10 Anniversary grant opportunity from the New Alliance Foundation. KNOX will update our organization’s technology capacity to run more efficiently and be able to share more data with supporters.

New England Seed, Comstock, Ferre & Co., and Hart Seed all donated thousands of seed packets for our community gardening program.

The National Environmental Education Foundation supported our Greater Hartford Green Team as well through their Every Day Event Grant program.

North East Expo donated 300 yards of bulk mulch used by our Green for landscaping projects around the city.

Prudential Financial Services Group is committed to a safe and clean Hartford and will support major work at Westford Park, located adjacent to their office building.

Thank you to REI West Hartford for your Chief Sponsorship of the Greater Hartford Green Team in 2012, 2013, 2014 and now 2015! Your support provides the resources to ensure volunteers have the proper tools, flowers, mulch, trees and more!

The Richard P. Garmany Fund through the Hartford Foundation for Public Giving provided funding for a brand new fence around KNOX’s Niles Street Community Garden and will also fund the eradication of invasive species in Pope Park.

A gift from the Samuel Roskin Trust through the Hartford Foundation for Public Giving will allow KNOX to purchase a much-needed truck for our Green Space Crew.

TD Bank awarded KNOX and the City of Hartford with a Green Streets grant to plant 70 trees in the North End of Hartford this year. Not only do the trees provide environmental benefits, but they are also a source of fresh, local produce.

Travelers leads the environmental charge in Hartford! They will once again support KNOX’s Green Crew AmeriCorps program and will provide the backing for a solar panel and electric heater installation. This will allow KNOX to lead the green scene and keep our greenhouse open year-round.

United Illuminating supported KNOX’s Green Crew AmeriCorps workforce training program for Hartford young adults.

The William & Alice Mortensen Foundation funded the purchase of a state-of-the-art commercial grade mower and trailer for our Green Crew AmeriCorps program.

The newsletter of KNOX. Proudly Planning & Programs.

WINTER - SPRING, 2014 - 2015

And Thanks to You...

Donors, volunteers, friends, investors, advisors...you’ve grown a truly marvelous year in Hartford. We are honored to work with you for a stronger, greener, healthier, more beautiful Hartford.

Pratt & Whitney awarded KNOX two Green Power Grants to create a Reading Garden at Noah Webster School and a clean-up at the Earle Street Community garden.
Green Crew AmeriCorps Program

MEMBER SPOTLIGHT

Each member of the Green Crew AmeriCorps program has a different story and different dreams they hope to pursue. A top priority for KNOX staff is to provide more individualized training and mentoring for the 15 members enrolled. Program Director Ericus Adams pushes the members to think outside the day-to-day horticulture and landscaping work and focus on their futures. Throughout the year, KNOX staff advises members how to reach their personal goals, how to land a job or get into school after the program ends.

Brittany's a Hartford resident and an undergraduate student at Long Island University in Brooklyn, NY. Brittany started the program this fall to earn the education award necessary to finish college. This is her first year with KNOX and her second term dedicated to an AmeriCorps program. Two terms of service means she will earn double the education award when she finishes, making her that much closer to a college degree. Brittany has dedicated her time to volunteering with preschool students and various other nonprofit organizations in Hartford to become a more well-rounded individual, which was part of the appeal of KNOX's Green Crew program. Her goal for the future is to become a journalist and a preschool teacher, with the hopes of one day writing her own novel and opening a preschool.

Earle Street Green House Initiative

Due to the generous funding of the Garden Club of Hartford, the Earle Street Community Garden now has a passive-solar greenhouse. It will be used year-round to grow greens, to start seedlings in the spring, and to grow heat-loving crops like peppers and tomatoes. This winter, Community Outreach Associate Emily Petersen and Green Crew Director Ericus Adams designed a program for the Green Crew members to learn the business and methods of gardening and farming. The crew members will be split into 3 groups and receive training in how to grow, maintain, and harvest greens like spinach, kale, and collard greens. Members will also receive monthly workshops in how to translate these skills into an entrepreneurial effort from local social entrepreneurs Onyeka Obiocha, President, and COO of A Life Coffee and Spencer Curry, co-founder of FRESH Farm Aquaponics. The program will run December through March, with members making final presentations at the beginning of April.

Our community gardens across Hartford have gone to bed! In 2014, gardeners harvested bushel after bushel of fresh vegetables and herbs - feeding themselves, their families, and their communities. We've added 3 acres of land this year! Some of our gardeners became CT Grown certified by the Department of Agriculture through KNOX and now represent the Hartford Grown movement at farmer's markets around the city. Salvador Casales sells his produce at the North End Homestead, and Billings Forge Farmer's markets, and Tahmeka and Chad are selling at the North End market. Tahmeka and Chad even started making homemade soaps to sell using their harvest of herbs!

Urban Roots...Art in the Garden Series

KNOX's artist-in-residence Carol Padberg spent the last year hosting community conversations to discuss how to bring art and culture to the gardens. Listed below are a variety of projects in production now that came from the conversations. Thank you to the City of Hartford and the Greater Hartford Arts Council who sponsored the project.

The mural at the Cabot Street Community Garden has been a hit with young and old.

The Christian Activities Council, Zezzo House, and KNOX community gardeners brought to life a mural at the Cabot Street Community Garden this fall. Through community conversations, all partners pieced together a vision for what the mural would consist of, representing the community and how the garden has transformed the street. This garden now breathes beauty and life where there was once an abused vacant lot.

This in-ground mosaic adds a unique touch to the Evergreen Community Garden in Hartford's West End.

Gardeners at the Evergreen Community Garden came together on November 8th to construct an in-ground mosaic to welcome visitors and gardeners alike. The mosaic uses recycled ceramic tiles and mirrors.

All in all, it's been quite the busy growing season for KNOX's community gardens. Thanks to all our gardeners for the hard work you do to cultivate “Hartford Grown” local, organic food right here in our city! If you are interested in being a part of these ongoing projects, please contact Emily Petersen at (860) 951-7694 ext. 28 or at emily@knoxparks.org.
We had a party - you made it beautiful.

Thank you so much for leading the locally-grown movement with KNOX. It's humbling to count so many kind hearts among our friends. Special thanks to Grant's Restaurant & Bar, Vito's By The Park, and Mariana Evica who all donated their time, energy and culinary expertise to serve some of the best food around.

Thanks again to the energetic duo of Dennis House and Kara Sundlun for emceeing the event! Also, thank you to flutist Sherry Winston for providing the entertainment.

Because of you, the Garden Tour & Twilight Dinner raised over $32,000 to carry the Hartford Grown movement forward. From the trees, gardens, and parks... and more importantly from the gardeners, young adults, and neighborhoods of Hartford.

THANK YOU

34 residents, businesses and organizations were recognized for their outstanding landscaping efforts in the city of Hartford. KNOX and McCarter & English recognized those city residents who go above and beyond with their gardens, believing one nice yard can inspire a greener, more beautiful capital city. Each awardee was inducted into the Hartford Urban Gardeners Society.

Thank you to McCarter & English for sponsoring the event and making the night so special.

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