

**2023  
ANNUAL  
REPORT**  
Let's Grow Together!

# Gardening Gives Hope

St. Joseph Community Gardens aims to supply local neighborhoods considered "food deserts" with sustainable life skills to grow organic produce. We provide free seeds to families interested in growing their gardens through our Seed Hub distribution program. We aim to support our growing community gardens with seasonal starts every Spring from our SJCG Greenhouse. We wish to continue our outreach programs with our current partnerships with the YWCA GRIT Center, InterServ, and more. We are primarily a group of community volunteers dedicated to the health and well-being of St. Joseph, Missouri.

## Committed to Community, Everyone Needs a Hand

St. Joseph Community Gardens, formerly known as Midtown Community Gardens, began in 2017. SJCG acquired nonprofit organization status in 2021. Accreditations include USDA The People's Garden List ([www.usda.gov](http://www.usda.gov)) and Community Gardens Commission Seed Hub distribution status based out of Philadelphia ([www.coopgardens.org](http://www.coopgardens.org)). The St. Joseph Museums, St. Francis Baptist Church, InterServ, and The YWCA GRIT Center are our affiliates.

We thank our suppliers, vendors, agencies, and patrons who give us hope to reach our goals and give back to our community.



Carrots are a good source of many essential nutrients that are important for growth and development, such as Vitamin A, Vitamin K, Vitamin C, and potassium, which can be beneficial for children and teenagers.



# Our Root Run Deep



In 2020, SJCG formed with like-minded mentors and volunteers to maintain a new site opportunity as a "goodwill garden" accessible to the midtown community. The Hamilton Henderson Memorial Garden, located at the Wyeth Tootle Mansion, has served three summer seasons of free veggies to those who come to pick at their leisure. This garden boasts a wide variety of produce. Come see for yourself!

Since its inception in 2017, SJCG seeds and transplants have gone to St. Francis Baptist parish men's group in the midtown corridor. The men's group garden has flourished and expanded over several seasons with future aspirations to teach gardening skills to youth parishioners in the 2024 season.

root for our  
community



# Hope Grows & Doesn't Give Up

We aim to accommodate that need with a **Seed Starting Grow Kit**, and outfit them with the essentials to grow seedlings, and offer educational materials. We hope to expand this onward to our partnerships as well. For example, our leader, Danielle, spent time last Spring with the gifted students at **Robidoux Middle School** and donated seeds, planters, and knowledge in growing healthy food. Part of our mission is to reach the youth in our community and nurture them in the promise of gardening and all the health benefits it provides.

In 2020, we provided and maintained six garden beds and a sunflower house at the **Barlett Center** as part of our outreach mission to work for area youth. Our contribution to the Bartlett Center included planting seven fruit trees, multiple blackberry bushes, and strawberry plants.

Through private donations, our **Harvest Box Program** has been a grateful success. SJCG has given weekly harvest boxes for two seasons during the six week growing season with fresh produce to 20 families at InterServ and the YWCA GRIT Center. We offered a free giveaway of harvest box delivery to three senior citizens in 2022 and again in 2023. We aim to continue offering harvest boxes to these partnerships each season.

Through the kindness of **The St. Joseph Museums**, we have added raised beds to the Frederick museum site for staff use and our gardening needs to supplement the Harvest Box program. St. Joseph Museum has also supported our **Seed Hub Distribution** efforts by giving us space to share the seeds with the community onsite and during events.

Top to Bottom:  
Harvest Box Delivery to InterServ  
St. Francis Men's Group Garden (Left)  
Hamilton Henderson Memorial Garden (Right)



# Growing Together Thrive & Sustainability



**GROW LOCAL ST. JOE**



[sjcgardens.org](http://sjcgardens.org)

## Benefits:

- Increase access to fresh foods
- Help improve air and soil quality
- Reduce “food miles” that are required to transport nutritious food
- Can reduce neighborhood waste through composting
- Positively impact the urban micro-climate
- Can replace impervious structures and improve water infiltration
- Increase property value
- Improve food security
- Increase physical activity through garden maintenance activities
- Improve dietary habits through education
- Increase fruit and vegetable intake
- Reduce risk of obesity and obesity-related diseases
- Improve mental health and promote relaxation

## Social ties are important

**to the wellbeing of people** in a community since they can bring positive health effects and community involvement. Community gardens allow for the creation of social ties and build a greater feeling of community. These connections help reduce crime, empower residents and allow residents to feel safe in their neighborhoods.



# Greenhouse & Grant Happiness!

In 2022, SJCG was gifted property at 1812 Felix by a residing neighbor in the **Harris Kemper Historic District Neighborhood**. In 2023, SJCG was awarded a **USDA Matching Funds Grant** for our new site, allowing us to install a commercial-grade greenhouse, tool shed, tractor, tiller, and growing supplies. **The East Side Rotary Group** donated and built a privacy fence, greenhouse tables, strawberry towers, potato planters, and shelves. **Mosaic Life Care** donated water line access, and **Tim Sprague Construction** provided the hydrant hookup for irrigation needs. The purpose of the greenhouse is to become self-sustaining in our growing efforts and offer seedlings to our community gardens. We also have a permanent **Blessings Box** donated by **Dana Oerman** filled with non-perishable food and clothing items accessible year-round to the community.

## Looking Forward – Helping Hands, Making an Impact & Giving Hope

Our challenges this year have been few, but our need for volunteers and secured help remains necessary. We have been fortunate to have **four local high school students** apply to volunteer for their community service graduation requirements. We have also received volunteer hours from the **Buchanan County Children's Division** and Correctional Services. Volunteer maintenance is needed weekly at the community garden sites during spring prep through growth and fall clean-up. With the addition of the greenhouse and duties, we require a staff that can be accountable. Our goal is to offer an **Apprentice Scholarship** to give people interested in a future in the agriculture industry an opportunity to learn about greenhouse growth and community work. Providing a scholarship can ensure our expansion and outreach can continue.



**Let's Grow Together!**

Visit [sjcgardens.org](http://sjcgardens.org) for volunteer opportunities.

*Above, Emily volunteers in Greenhouse*



# Making An Impact & Giving Hope



**2** has an opportunity for growth, whether giving or gaining. Community Gardens have long been a way to find that common ground.

Based on the data from censusreporter.org, in 2022 Buchanan County residents total 82,900, and 19.1% of its population is below the poverty line. That is 1.5 times



**4** two seasons with 460 harvest box deliveries. Last year alone, our seed hub distributed over 17,682 seeds. Our first year of greenhouse growth grew with 2,000 starters. We gave those starters to partnership community garden sites. We hosted a discounted sale to benefit the



**1** The whole community of St. Joseph will benefit from the underserved to those who give back. SJCG strives to equalize opportunity for healthy choices and promotes finding common ground through gardening that also leads to social and economic benefits. Every person in our community



**3** the rate nationally. Beyond growing vegetables from our community garden sites, we offer knowledge to people who want to become sustainable food sources by increasing their food growing knowledge.

Our Harvest Box Program served over 80 families in



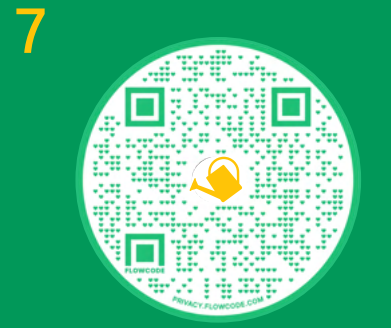
**5** Organization's restocking of supplies. We donated a dwarf peach tree for the Wyeth Tootle Mansion pollinator garden. Provide the gifted class of Robidoux Middle School with garden supplies with class visits.

We are an open-door organization. We hope



**6** everyone in our community passes through and gains the promise of health and longevity through the power of nutritious food options.

Please consider making a donation so we can continue to grow.



Let's Grow Together!



# Planting the Seed & Watching the Growth

Our Organization has been evolving, and we are seeing the impact, need, and curiosity from all. We have actively pursued relationships with other nonprofits by offering our support to help with their missions. Our commitment to building the bridge of self-sustainability in gardening for health, mental, and physical agility, as well as becoming a social resource of support, has been our ultimate goal. Together, we can grow St. Joseph in a positive direction.

## Let's Give Hope Together

Thank you so much for your contributions to the St. Joseph Community Gardens. It is through your support that we can keep growing. Since we are a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization, all donations are tax-deductible.

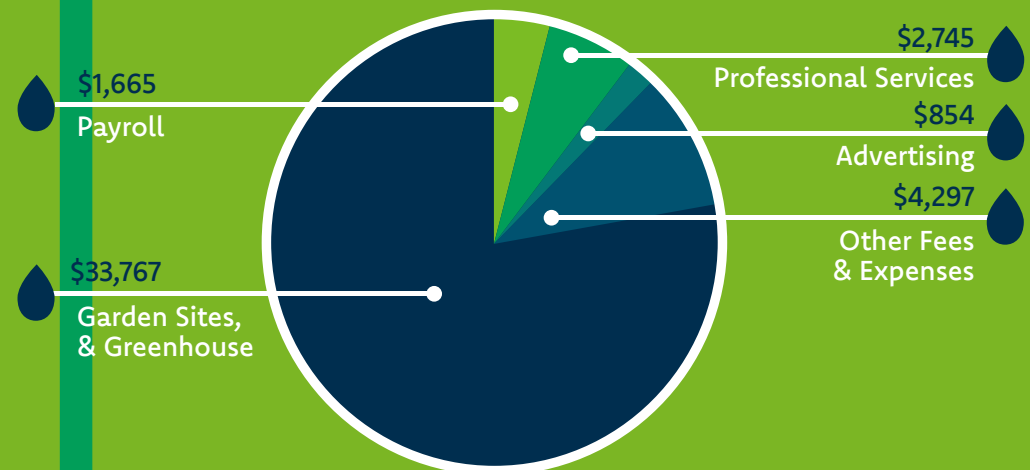
We also accept donations of seeds or gently used or new gardening supplies, including pots, tools, etc. Please email at [www.sjcgardens.org](http://www.sjcgardens.org) if you are interested in donating any of these supplies.

Nothing is more sustainable than growing our own food. Our vision for 2024 looks promising. Follow us at [www.sjcgardens.org](http://www.sjcgardens.org) for the latest developments.

## Earnings Report FY 2023



## Expenses Report FY 2023





# Blessed Beyond Measure

by Danielle McGaughy



## Looking ahead the future looks bright.

Past funding has put us in a position to promote, maintain, and give gardens and community hope. Our need is to continue to grow and provide sustainability. Our most significant contributor has been the USDA Matching Grant Fund of \$33,000. Still, our most heartfelt has been the donations and physical labor by our local entities like **Eastside Rotary Club, Mosaic Life Care, the leadership group of United Way, Patterson Legan Group, Gertzma Financial Advisors, St. Joseph Museums, local growers/farmers, and our committed community patrons through in-kind donations.** These donations have given us *the power to get started.*

## Where do we GROW from here?



## Educational Resources

Future funding received will go towards expanding our community outreach within St. Joseph, Missouri. Our goal is to develop community partnerships with other local nonprofits and schools. By providing educational resources, we will further our mission for our city.

## Garden Site Expansion

Provide our **partnership nonprofits** with two raised garden boxes within our new **GROW TOGETHER Program.** This investment will nurture community awareness and provide an opportunity for the youth to have access to fresh-grown produce.

We are also expanding ease of utilities with a new hydrant dedicated to and located within the **Hamilton Henderson Memorial Garden** at the Wyeth Tootle Mansion.

## Empowerment Scholarship

We will be offering a **SJCG Scholarship** for the 2024 greenhouse/community gardens season to work and learn part-time during the growing season. We want this to be an annual opportunity and evolve as more resources become available.