



Green St. Louis Machine GAZETTE

Sustainability
theme of the month:
Respect for Limits

March, 2025
Edition

Respect for Limits!

March's sustainability theme is 'Respect for Limits.' As we watch the first buds of spring unfurl, the abundance of nature can feel boundless. It is our great privilege and also our great responsibility to steward this precious resource. This means, above all, respecting its limits.

When Green St. Louis Machine students grow produce at their educational organizations and schools, they learn how much water, light, and effort it takes to bring their meals to the table. As they weigh the collards, the lettuce, the bok choy, and the green onions they grew together in school, they learn about the limits of our own bodies, which cannot run effectively on highly processed, ultra-refined sugars—not to mention their **environmental impact**. They learn about the limits of our soil and water to protect future harvests. They grow food in aeroponic Tower Gardens. Due to the vertical design and recirculation of water in the system, the gardens use 95% less water and 90% less land than traditional gardening. They learn that to love something means to take very good care of it.



A wonderful way to celebrate and support these efforts is by attending the Green Gala on April 3rd at Mathews-Dickey Boys and Girls Club. This event will honor the work of the Green STL Machine by presenting creative recipes, prepared by chefs, using locally, grown-in-schools greens and herbs, planted and nurtured by students. Attendees will also have the opportunity to take home gift bags with a variety of fresh, student-grown herbs—another way to respect our environment and to connect with each other around the theme of food and sustainability! As the Indigenous saying goes, “When the last tree is cut, the last fish is caught, and the last river is polluted; when to breathe the air is sickening, you will realize, too late, that wealth is not in bank accounts and that you can’t eat money.” (Alanis Obomsawin)

How will YOU respect Earth's limits this coming month? To get some ideas, and to measure your current impact, check out this resource: **Ecological Footprint Calculator**.

Mathews-Dickey Gardening Club



Chef Rona Leah helped the students use Swiss Chard to make a "Green Snack" and they were surprised to find they loved it! Watch us:

[Click to watch Chef Rona Leah teach us how make a Swiss Chard Snack!!!](#)



Students harvested Swiss Chard, Basil and Cilantro from 2 Tower Gardens and brought the produce home to their families, and shared with tutor Ms. Valerie!

Watch us HARVEST:
[Harvesting and Sharing Veggies!](#)



Farm to Table Garden Club

Students cleaned and re-assembled their Tower Gardens, added nutrients and planted seedlings. The Green Gala will be held at Mathews-Dickey so their Tower Gardens need to be beautiful because they will be on display!

The Biome School

Alfalfa is a "Gourmet Green!" Students at **Biome** harvested their alfalfa greens and are preparing to plant more seedlings in their Tower Garden. This hands-on activity teaches students about sustainability, nutrition, and the science of growing food. The Tower Garden allows them to grow nutritious crops like alfalfa, providing valuable lessons on healthy eating and food production. The students' efforts highlight the importance of learning how to cultivate and appreciate fresh, locally grown produce. It's an exciting and educational experience that promotes both creativity and responsibility.

[Watch this Video to see the LONG ROOTS!](#)



Giving his garden a "haircut"



Look at these long roots!



Time to clean the Tower Garden

North Side Community Elementary
Farm-to-Table Club
Made Caprese hors d'oeuvres with
Basil that they grew! YUM!

Here is Amaurie tasting caprese for the first time!

They also harvested some lettuce by giving it a “haircut” And they checked on sprouting seedlings AND played a game with the word PROPAGATE!



Watch us make and eat Caprese Sticks!!



North Side students also made Garlic Chard with Chef Joia, and the kids loved it!!! Should they serve it at the Green Gala April 3rd?

Watch us make Garlic Chard

Kairos Academy- Green St. Louis Machine Club
is working on their recipe for the Green Gala:
Cauliflower Catastrophe! How will the chefs prepare this one?



Green Staff of the Month:
Alisa Bennett-Hart, English Language Arts
Teacher
at Carr Lane VPA

Alisa is a Green STL Machine Advisor

This month, we feature her article and thoughts on “Why I love Green St. Louis Machine, A Growing History by Alisa Bennett-Hart”

Green St. Louis Machine is made up of many partners with their own unique desires for the organization’s threefold Mission Statement*: Some look to see sustainable access to healthy food and education on healthy living for communities in the St. Louis area, that in some ways have been overlooked or forgotten. Others, like many of the educators involved in the organization, seek to open the eyes of our youth to the science, ecological and environmental justice, and entrepreneurial opportunities that are key to the organization’s mission. Then there are those like Alisa Bennett-Hart, who really like the second mission statement! According to Alisa, “I just want

to give young people the organic sense that growing plants – in the ground, in a classroom Tower Garden, or even in a cardboard box – is their birthright, especially if they are brown or Black children like me!” For Alisa Green St. Louis Machine is a means to an end. Her goal is to return the love of growing good things to eat to the heirs of people stolen from a land to bring their gifts for growing to a new land. That’s it! It is what was done for her by her grandmother decades ago.

Alisa said that as a child, she often went with her grandmother to big offices and watched as she dusted, vacuumed, moped floors and pulled trash. And Alisa says, *“To this day, I am calmed by cleaning and watching others clean – it is a soothing meditation to my often-anxious soul. I get much the same contentment from gardening. The gift of gardening was passively handed to me by my grandmother, as was the fight to break norms and blaze my own trail. I remember sitting on my grandmother’s backstairs: eating fish she had caught, cleaned, and cooked; her collards, sliced tomatoes, and onions; and hot water cornbread with my fingers. It is one of my favorite memories. Thanks to these gardening memories, I have always had a garden in a pot, on a balcony, in a backyard, and now in a Tower Garden in my living room.”*

As an English Language Arts Teacher, Alisa gives her students organic lessons in growing – from the flats of seedlings on her classroom window sill to her full-grown classroom Tower Garden teeming with collard greens!

For Black History month, she showed a video of the history of Black people and greens. [History of Greens Video](#) Then, they harvested and cooked the greens! One of her classes harvested the greens from the Tower Garden, the next class cleaned the greens, and the final class seasoned and cooked the greens. Then at the end of the day, all her students got to taste the result of their labor!

Alisa says she is not sure what will stick with her students from her lessons because it is not up to her to decide that they will only eat healthy food, or that they will be environmentalists, or that they will have a garden themselves this summer or one day in their future. Alisa reminds us that she just wants them to explore the experience of growing, learning, expanding their worldview with a history of cultivation that belongs to them. And being part of Green St. Louis Machine helps her do that!

Note: Alisa says her grandmother’s nickname for her was “Little TryMe” Congratulations on being our Green Staff of the Month and for trying to inspire us! Meet Alisa at the Green Gala April 3rd.

* Kids in Green St. Louis Machine Classrooms:

1. Engage in STEM/STEAM practices through Tower Garden technology;
2. Promote nutrition by growing, preparing, and eating healthy food with students, thereby teaching them to independently acquire their own food;
3. Develop skills in urban agriculture, entrepreneurship and community engagement.



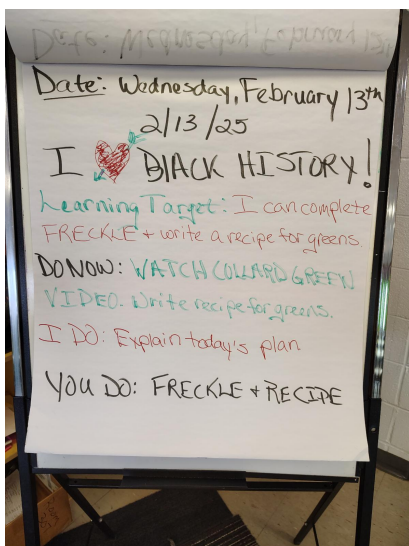
Martha Helen

Alisa's Grandmother's Story:

Martha Helen was a force of nature! She was from Arkansas and would cuss you out or shoot at you if you got crossways with her. They called her "TryMe" in the country town of her birth. She moved to St. Louis like many as part of the Great Migration North. She cleaned houses, cooked, care for the sick and elderly and lived in many of the places that housed "colored people" of the time.

By the 1970's, she was working as a supervisor for a large commercial cleaning company and was one of the first Black women to buy property on the Southside of St. Louis – an area that was notoriously racist and still carries that reputation in certain corners today. Martha Helen and a few of her best girlfriends bought four-family flats on McRee Avenue in the 70's. They were in-residence landlords, did their own maintenance, and grew incredible backyard gardens. All this property was eventually acquired by eminent domain and is now owned by St. Louis University. Their gardens stretched from their backdoors to the alley – full of tomatoes, collard greens, sweet potatoes, peppers, okra, melons, strawberries, sunflowers, and all kinds of other good things to cook and eat.

**Green Students of the Month are Ms. Bennett-Hart's classes who were involved with all aspects of the collard greens, described above!
See Recipe of the Month for their recipe!**



Mixed Greens Ingredients



Recipe by Ms. Alisa Bennett-Hart and her English Language Arts students, created spring semester 2025

Mixed greens from your aeroponic Tower Garden (Collard, Mustard, Kale, Bok Choy)
Seasoned salt
Ground pepper to taste
Caramelized onions
Smoked turkey.

Directions

1. Fry smoked turkey and onions in olive oil
2. Add a minimal amount of liquid to loosen turkey
3. Crush bullion cubes and add to pot
4. Add washed greens
5. Simmer till limp
6. Add seasoned salt and pepper to taste
7. Serve with cornbread



Donate to the Growing of Green St. Louis Machine!!

□ We are hopeful for donations to fund the upkeep of the greenhouse urban agricultural learning center, support our partner schools and pay for the Green Gala. Please consider a donation for our worthy cause! Thank you to those who have donated already this year! This incredible support will help us continue our mission to foster sustainability and innovation in our community. We are truly grateful for this kindness and commitment to our cause. Thank you so much! □□

#GreenStLouisMachine
#GreenSTL_Machine #Gratitude
#CommunitySupport #Sustainability
#Innovation



Stella Erondy and Sherry Amen pose in front of Swiss chard, with the check!

If you would like to support us, you can donate by scanning our QR Code!



**In case you still missed it,
we were featured on Giving Tuesday
on Channel 4!!**

*See the video clip of Green St. Louis Machine's North Side
Community Elementary School Kids by clicking the link
below!*

Watch us on Channel 4!



We need to raise \$15,000 in 2025!!

**We still have a LOT of need!
We are so thankful for the \$10,000
we received from an anonymous**



A growing need: St. Louis nonprofits ask for help ahead of Giving Tuesday amid declining donations

firstalert4.com

donor, which greatly propelled us toward our 2025 goal! We are hoping to raise an additional \$15,000 to reach our goal of \$25,000 in 2025!

Thanks for giving to us!

You can donate to The Green St. Louis Machine here!

Or visit our website::

Green St Louis Machine Website

Why do we do The Green St. Louis Machine?



Food apartheid in St. Louis contributes to high rates of food insecurity, childhood obesity, diabetes, and heart disease. Thousands of children live in areas with little to no access to quality grocery stores, leaving families with limited options for fresh, nutritious food. As a result, processed and unhealthy foods have become a regular part of their lifestyle.



Many of these children have never tasted or even learned the names of common fruits and vegetables. This lack of exposure to fresh, nutritious food affects their school performance, mental outlook, and overall well-being. Over time, poor nutrition increases their risk of developing diabetes, heart disease, and other serious health issues later in life.



YOU have the power to make a difference in their lives today — paving the way for healthier futures! Through our program, students grow, harvest, prepare, and enjoy fresh, nutritious foods, fostering a sense of ownership and empowerment over their own food choices. Together, we can transform communities and break the cycle of poor nutrition. Join us in our mission! Donate or volunteer today to help us create a healthier, brighter future for our children.



Video Clip!

You can learn more about our mission by clicking here to watch our video:

Green St. Louis Machine Promo Video

and feel free to pass this video on to your friends and family. Thank you for your support!

Download our Mission Statement Flyer!

Click here to download



Save the Date for the 2025 **GREEN GALA!**

Date: April 3, 2025

Time: 4:30 - 6:30 PM

Location: Mathews-Dickey Club, part of Boys & Girls Clubs of Greater St. Louis.

Join us . . . click to get tickets!

[Register for The Green Gala](#)



This year, we will hear from some passionate teachers and students as they explain "Why Green St. Louis Machine"! So come, attend, volunteer, get involved, donate, or support.....!

See one of our past **[Green Gala Videos](#)**

Urban Agricultural Learning Center Greenhouse Tower Farm! Our Greens will be served at the Green Gala!



Nayeli and Omar harvest
Bok Choy.



Jordan, a dietetics student at
St. Louis University, interviews
for a summer internship.



Joia leads the harvest at
The Greenhouse!

**March 29th will be our first
Farmers Market including
tours of the Tower Farm !
Save the date and time - from
3-6 PM! Address: 2101
Chouteau Ave.**

***Would you like to help a few
hours in the greenhouse?
CALL OR TEXT
314-757-6607!***

Community Partner of the Month

Gene Slay's Girls & Boys Club

Family Engagement Night



Features of the evening included:

TOWER GARDEN

WORM FARM

PLANTING BASIL

PICKLES AND PASTA

Gene Slay's Student Garden Club hosted a Family Engagement Night!

They made 36 jars of dill pickles.

Kids decorated 25 planter pots and planted seeds.

The Garden Club served their pesto pasta salad made with basil and greens they grew in their Tower Garden!

There was "worm bin exploration"!

Farmer and Chef Rona Leah led a gardening workshop.

Watch us plant Basil and jar Pickles!!



Support us! A jar of pickles is just \$5!!



AMERICORPS VISTA!

THREE POSITIONS ARE STILL OPEN!!

We want to let you know ASAP that Green St. Louis Machine has 3 AmeriCorps VISTA positions OPEN! Could you suggest contacts/people we could forward this to such as colleagues in the organizations, schools and universities you work with?

M:STL- Green STL Machine Community Builder VISTA

M:STL- Green STL Machine Outreach, Capacity & Market VISTA

These positions could be good for high school graduates or college students taking a gap year to explore career path opportunities or to gain resume-building experiences and knowledge to prepare them for applying for good jobs.....or even early retirees or people in-between jobs or careers! Full health coverage and child care is certainly appealing, as is a monthly stipend of over \$1,800!

So please help us with these great opportunities and call/text with any questions

Sherry Amen 314-757-6607, Sherry@GreenSTLMachine.org

Stella Erundu 314-590-3247, Stella@GreenSTLMachine.org



*Thank YOU for
partnering with us!*

Wish to donate? Click here:

**[Donate to The Green St. Louis
Machine!](#)**

Here's what your donation can do if you
click on DONATE ANY AMOUNT
ABOVE:

Donate award certificates for all 500 students in
the GSM \$100

\$200 or more: Attend the Green Gala to be part
of it as a VIP and meet Stephen Ritz himself
who will be our keynote speaker!!

\$1,500 will buy a Tower Garden for a school
desperate for the opportunity to grow food in a
classroom!

\$2,000 will cover the food and chefs to make the
students' recipes at the Green Gala!

Donate T-SHIRTS for all 500 GSM students
\$5,000 (Can have your company logo too!)

Donate 500 APRONS for all Green St Louis
Machine students – \$6,500 (Can have your
company logo too!)

Support the GSM portion of salary for a GSM
Americorps Vista (Like the Peace Corps only
working on American soil) for a year \$5,000

Support a GSM summer camp including field
trips to GSM's Urban Agricultural Learning
Center Greenhouse for 8 summer weeks of
2025
\$7,000



Have questions?

Sherry Amen at 314-757-6607



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