

## In 2024....



We had 3,744 participant opportunities for children, 215 for youth and 722 for adults and seniors, in over 400 program hours.



We were joined by 13 placement students who contributed over 1,500 hours of program delivery and development.



62 teachers and program leaders booked our programs.



We cultivated 8 different school and community gardens in Toronto



We purchased a new e-bike which allowed us to deliver our programs to new schools & get lots of produce to market

### Board of Directors

Chair: Charlene Lord

Vice Chair: Iris (Ike) Karuna

Treasurer: Kayleigh Fisher

Secretary: Abbey Huggan/Ike Karuna

Directors at large:

Alorani Hahn (part year)

Chanel Harris

Karen Jull

Megan McGinnis-Dunphy

Taylor Millan

Tara Pearson

Sailavasan Vettivelu

Courtney Wynne

### Key Volunteers

Zoe Kende

Donald Russell



## Green Thumbs Growing Kids

Charitable Number:  
806962353RR0001



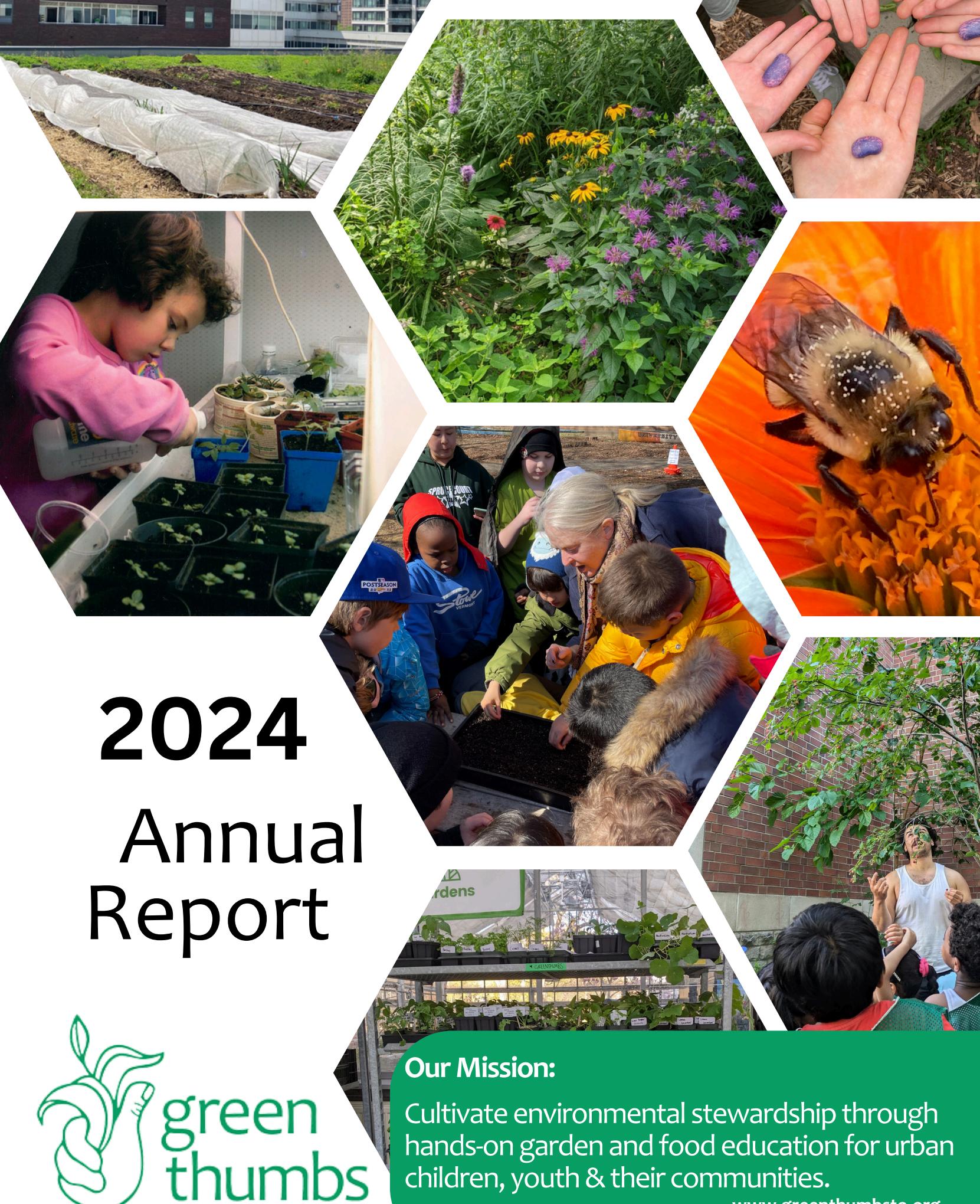
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### From our Board Chair

As I look back at 2024 I am immensely proud of the accomplishments of Green Thumbs Growing Kids. I am grateful for the trust and support of our community, staff, volunteers, students, teachers, coordinators, donors, funders, sponsors and collaborators which enables us to provide hands-on garden and food education to children and youth. Thank you for believing in the power of gardening and helping us grow.

With upmost gratitude,  
Charlene Lord, Board Chair



# 2024 Annual Report



### Our Mission:

Cultivate environmental stewardship through hands-on garden and food education for urban children, youth & their communities.

[www.greenthumbsto.org](http://www.greenthumbsto.org)

# Program Highlights

Allan Gardens welcomed us back in spring, giving us a place to start our seedlings with school groups. Big thanks to [Friends of Allan Gardens](#)! We also held our annual [Spring is In the Air](#) event with live music, plant sale, face painting, silent auction and kids' activities, in April.



We continued our [Urban Trees from Seed](#) program, thanks to the [Urban Forestry Department of the City of Toronto](#), with new or expanded tree nursery locations at all of our school garden sites. We are excited for the future of these trees, as part of the City's goal of getting to 40% canopy cover from the current 26%. Species include Red Oak, Kentucky Coffeetree and Pawpaw.

We continued programming at three primary schools, Rose Ave PS, Winchester JSPS and Sprucecourt PS. We also supplied programming to Frankland PS, George Webster PS, Forest Valley PS, Morse Street Jr. PS, Nelson Mandela Park PS, St. Maria Goretti PS (TCDSB), and Thorncliffe Park PS. Many programs were part of [Teaming With Life](#), (photo right) a new program, which introduced a microscope and a worm bin for elementary students, made possible by funding from [Telus](#). Thanks to our Teaming With Life contractors for making this a popular program!

We had post-secondary students from Toronto Metropolitan University learning in hands-on programs at Winchester JSPS and Rose Ave PS (photo right), from classes in the Early Childhood Education department such as Children and Nature (undergraduate) and Ecological Curriculum, Pedagogy, and Research (graduate).

## School Gardens Land Back

**Cohort 2:  
March 2024 - June 2024**

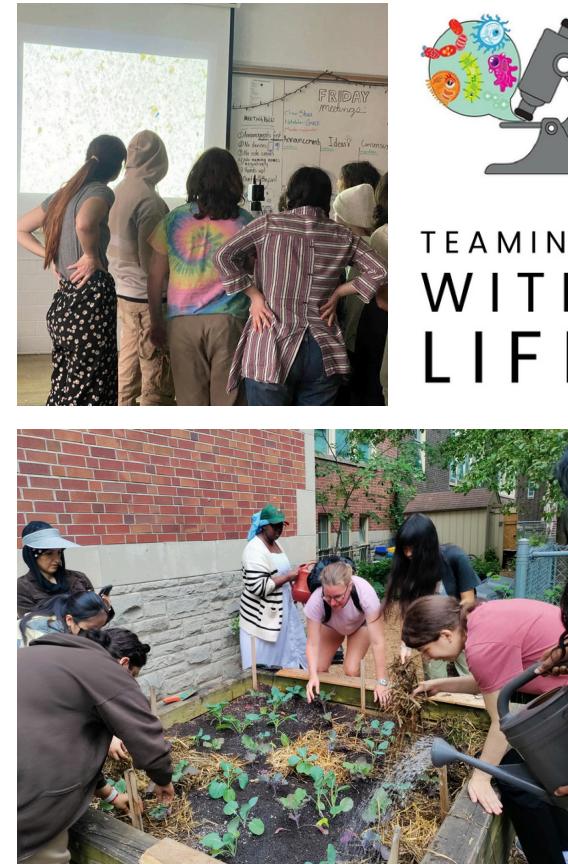
*"The SGLB program has truly expanded my awareness of the potential value of school gardens. The program was a great opportunity to practice decolonizing my thoughts and actions in community and has assisted me in deepening my connection to the land and how I relate to other beings. [I've begun to expand my awareness of our food system, ecology and our partnership with microbes, pollinators, weather systems, what consumption and reciprocity can look like. Other benefits I've experienced are the value of experiential learning, learning from the land ... I met and learned from so many wonderful people in the program (each of the participants, the Indigenous mentors and each of the GTGK team members)."*



School Gardens Land Back training program completed 2 full cohorts in the fall of 2023 and spring of 2024. We had the pleasure of learning with Indigenous mentors Jim Adams, Carolynne Crawley of Msit N'kmaq, Chef Johl Ringuette and Isaac Crosby of Crosby Gitigaan, in programs managed by Megan Bennett, funded by the [Canadian Red Cross](#). This program allowed 20 community members, mostly parents, to learn all about school gardens by participating as volunteers as well as joining in classroom and virtual learning time. The long-term goal of this program is to support a network of school gardens and gardeners, informed by Indigenous mentors.



Aiden Crosby supports a class to add compost to the garden beds. Other staff support students to harvest the compost at the back of the photo. This section of Winchester JSPS Public School Garden is slated for renovation in 2025. We hope that the trees will survive a move. The overall capital project will add a soccer pitch or two to the school grounds. These food beds were getting shaded anyway, so we'll move the sun-loving beds to the southeast of the garden area. We plan to re-engage students in the garden as soon as possible!



L: students harvesting greens for garden snacks!



R: We had a grand time celebrating our 25 years with 25 (just so happened!) of our dear friends and family.



L to R: Ella LaForme braided so much sweetgrass she wore it and gave it away to Indigenous folks all through the neighbourhood. Rebecca Davis Scott sold stuff at the Cabbagetown Farmers Market, and Taylor Millan joined Kahik Growers and loved it so much she joined our board! Welcome Taylor to the Green Thumbs family!



L to R: Tristan Andrews holds down Cabbagetown Farmers Market table! Karma Co-op starts selling our Pea Shoots, and Gail Lynch from the local Zero Bar bought a lot of beautiful flowers to ornament her mocktails!



# Greening our City



In late 2023, volunteer extraordinaire Zoe Kende (above left) designed and helped build a new tree nursery at Rose Ave. PS. Lots of Pawpaw trees went in there, and in September we offered a Garden Tour and Tree Giveaway. Above right, Pawpaw trees from the tree nursery at Rose Ave. PS, for the Garden Tour and Tree Giveaway Sept. 22/2024.

Thanks to [Ontario Trillium Foundation](#), we purchased a Tern cargo e-bike, which saw its first 999 km before the year was out! It was indispensable for getting trees to people, produce to market and getting Garden and Food Educators to schools a fair distance from our HQ. Below: student program at Three Valleys PS way up the Don River path!



## Daniels Green Roof

As we have done since 2018, we cultivated the extensive Green Roof atop Ada Slaight Hall at Daniels Spectrum in Regent Park. As always, this brought so much joy and lots of food to the community!

## New Roots Dinner

On October 22, the New Roots Dinner was held by Daniel et Daniel in their beautiful space on Carlton Street. The Tamarind Glazed Cornish Hen was delicious! Thanks D&D for helping us raise needed funds!



## Foundations, Sponsors, Grants

Air Canada Foundation  
Canada Summer Jobs  
Canadian Online Giving Foundation  
Canadian Red Cross  
CauseFund Toronto-  
Land & Food Justice Fund  
City of Toronto - Urban Forestry  
Come Alive Outside Canada  
Compost Council of Toronto  
Crooked Farmz  
Daniels HR Corporation  
Deltera Inc  
Ecclesiastic Insurance  
Echo Foundation  
Gerry Egan Children's Charity  
Green Circle Food Hub Ltd  
Investing in Neighbourhoods  
Lush Cosmetics - Charity Pot  
Miziwe Biik Aboriginal Training & Employment  
Nature's Path Foods  
Ontario Trillium Foundation  
Peter Gilgan Foundation  
Telus Community Grants  
The Glen Road Organics  
The Majorie & Joseph Wright Foundation  
The SM Blair Foundation  
United Way of Greater Toronto  
Wastenot Farms Inc.  
Willowool Foundation



### Individual Donors

**\$5000+**  
**Anonymous**  
**Robert & Kerin Spence**

**\$2,000+**  
**Anonymous**  
**Manuel & Cheryl Buchwald**  
**Mitchell Cohen**

**Up to \$2,000**

Fatima Aafreen  
Belsam Abdelrahman  
Omolola Abiola  
Alexander Achinioti Jönsson  
Megan Acton  
Jonathan Adams  
Sabrina Adamski  
Kamran Ahmadov  
Monica Aldrich  
Nadiia Alifanova  
Anna Amidani  
Rashan Amin  
Akshay Anand  
Savana Araya  
Duda Ardito  
Nicholas Arrigo  
Kary Atkinson  
Gina Barraza  
Jason Beaton  
Martin Berteri  
Priyanka Bhadani  
Elan Bibas  
Steven Biggs  
Susan Blagg  
Aoife Blessington  
Aishwarya Bogam  
Jordane Boothe  
Les Borbas  
Alakananda Bose  
Janice Bossmann  
Kyla Bothwell  
Samantha Brittany  
Laura Brown  
Cecilia Brush  
Robin Buyers  
Evelyn Caesar  
Camila Ceron Oviedo  
Boaz Chan  
Rajesh Kumar Chandabattula  
Adriana Chartrand  
Priyam Chawla  
Daryl Chow  
Kody Choy  
Sara Christakos  
Kyle Christian  
David Clandfield  
Will Cleaver  
Laura Collins  
Janelle Cooper  
Ricardo Correia  
Sariah Cumberbatxth  
Madison Currah  
Arthur Da Sylva  
Guilherme Da Silva  
Valeria D'Adderio  
Sarah Dancey

Johanne Daoust  
Ankita Das  
Tiago De Almeida  
Barbara De graaf  
Jordan De Mello  
Leonel Delgado Lopez  
Hope DesRoche  
Victoria Dias  
Sarah Dobec  
Christina Dowd  
Fatima Dua  
Belsam Dunphy  
Omolola Kogun  
Alexander Kurnia  
Megan Kurnia  
Jonathon Kurnia  
Sabrina Kurnia  
Kamran Kurnia  
Monica Kurnia  
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Anna Kurnia  
Rashan Kurnia  
Akshay Kurnia  
Savana Kurnia  
Duda Kurnia  
Nicholas Kurnia  
Kary Kurnia  
Gina Kurnia  
Jason Kurnia  
Martin Kurnia  
Priyanka Kurnia  
Elan Kurnia  
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Jordane Kurnia  
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Camila Kurnia  
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Kyle Kurnia  
David Kurnia  
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Laura Kurnia  
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Ricardo Kurnia  
Sariah Kurnia  
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Arthur Kurnia  
Guilherme Kurnia  
Valeria Kurnia  
Sarah Kurnia

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Prerana Junagade  
Lauren Jutai  
Rahul Kambhampati  
Mayank Kanoria  
Iris "Ike" Karuna  
Melissa Keane  
Michael Kogun  
June Komisar  
Shailja Kothary  
Debora Kuchme  
Santosh Kumar  
Sarah Kuruvilla  
Kevin Kwon  
Kathleen Quan  
Vishesh Raisinghani  
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Helen Lee  
Monica Lese  
sylvie levesque  
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Gail Littlejohn  
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Charlene Lord  
Angel Luo  
Ash M  
Marco Maccario  
Tony Manful  
Nahar Mangat  
Murray Marchant  
Don Marges  
Elin Marley  
Margie Marmor  
Debi Marshall  
Michele Martin  
Trisha Mathur  
Joshua Matthews  
Megan McGinnis-Dunphy  
Rachel McGlynn  
Helen McLeod  
John McVicker  
Ellen Michelson  
Anne Milne  
Jocelyn Molneux  
Michelle Montano  
Kieran Moreland  
Yana Moskovchenko  
Lara Mrosovsky  
Sara Mrosovsky  
Rebecca Muha  
Clodagh Mulhern  
John Murtaugh  
Jibran Nabeel  
Nicolas Nanfro  
Lina Navia Ramírez  
Nishka Nayak  
Cathy Nesbitt  
Ly Nguyen  
Meaghan Nicol  
Franziska Nonnenmann  
Tara Noronha  
Bridgette Norwood  
Maria Nunes  
Lenny Olin  
Erika Oliveros

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Chintan Pabari  
Alicia Pampano  
Richard Pereira  
Ilex Petroyama  
Emma Pilkington  
Bruno Pinheiro  
Rafael Pires  
Fernando Pires  
Conor Plunkett  
Lev Popruha  
Sajan Pradhan  
Dayna Price  
Kathleen Quan  
Boris Shusterman  
Nathan Slater  
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Marilyn Soares  
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Jennifer Ramsay  
Nilufer Rassul  
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Marina Riccio  
Simon Rodgers  
Selena Rossetti  
Vince Rozario  
Clara Rozee  
Michael Jordan Sablay

Marwa Sai  
Simran Saluja  
Adrian Savin  
Akshay Saxena  
Eduarda Schiefer Nedeff  
Kristin Schwartz  
Michelle Scott  
Armish Sehar  
Kate Sexton  
Mythili Shanmugavelu  
Maureen Shewchuk  
Fadi Shlah  
Sarvesh Shrivastava  
Boris Shusterman  
Nathan Slater  
Liam Smith  
Martina Vuksinic  
Bryce Watson  
Heather Wilberforce  
Suzanne Wilcox  
Simon Williams  
Philipa Wood  
Kellie Wright  
Lily Yee  
Henry Zaluski  
Ruija Zhang  
Suvd Zulbayar

## Staff & Contractors

Yousef Abdelsalam, Microscopy Contractor  
Tristan Andrews, Youth Program Co-ordinator and summer staff  
Megan Bennett, Volunteer and Training Program Co-ordinator  
Aiden Crosby, Indigenous Program Co-ordinator Trainee  
Gabriel Fajardo, student and summer staff  
Sunday Harrison, Executive Director  
Aamoo Horton, Indigenous Program Leader Trainee  
Shenice King, George Brown Food Studies student and summer staff  
Ella Laforme, Program Leader & Indigenous Mentor  
Shallen Murray, Garden and Food Educator  
Rebecca Davis Scott, Project Manager  
Cheyenne Sundance, Worm Wrangler Contractor  
Tsering Tashi, Administrative Co-ordinator

## Placement Students

Teacher Candidates:  
Sophia Karaiskakis, Addison Kilfoyle, Sean Jensen, Jennifer Phovixay, Hannah Thorne, Kelsey Docherty  
Community Worker: Katie Gauthier  
Child & Youth Workers: Emily Castillo, Liana Gallwey  
Food Studies: Shenice King  
Sociology: Samantha Goncalves  
Community Development: Gabriel Fajardo, Romeo Gringo Mones  
Secondary Co-op: Alexis Gingery

## Green Thumbs Growing Kids

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