

BEAUTIFYING PUBLIC HOUSING THROUGH GARDENS

CMHA and the Botanical Gardens are partnering in an initiative to design and build gardens in the community

Cuyahoga Metropolitan Housing Authority and the Cleveland Botanical Gardens are leading the way in increasing ingenuity to enhance public housing stock. On Wednesday, June 10, 2009, a garden planting event was held at CMHA's Cedar Estates. The collaboration transformed a vacant area into a flourishing urban garden, where residents can participate in growing fruits, vegetables and flowers.

“The idea behind this event, targeted mostly toward our youth residents, was for them to have an opportunity to make a difference in their own neighborhoods, so the community will support those who have invested their time and talent into something positive and give them a sense of pride and accomplishment,” said Cortney Kilbury, CMHA Marketing Manager.

More than 30 children gathered their rakes and shovels to take part in the planting of hot and mild peppers, tomatoes, zucchini, yellow squash, basil, parsley, cucumber, collards, green beans and even some colorful flowers and plants. In return, they will be able to share the food they've grown with their families and friends that live in the estate.

This event was such a grand success that CMHA is planning on continuing these efforts by planting more of these types of gardens on other of their various family estates. Not only do the residents and children learn the art of planting firsthand from seed to finished product, but they also create a greener community for themselves and their neighbors by working and interacting cooperatively to contribute and improve the environment.

“It is wonderful to see children of all ages coming together to create a vibrant garden in their community,” said Brittany Barski at Cleveland Botanical Gardens.