

THE SEED STORIES

Lakeview Tower Community Garden Build Day

By Brittany Barski

This April, Lutheran Hospital and Home Depot partnered with CMHA to help provide more access to healthy local food to the senior residents of Lakeview Tower. Through a grant from Charter One Bank, Lutheran Hospital helped CMHA build raised beds for community gardening behind the Lakeview Tower patio. All of the partners met with the manager and the local advisory council to discuss the idea of bringing this initiative to Lakeview. The LAC was very excited and they informed us on all of the other healthy initiatives they offer at the estate. It was a perfect fit and residents already started to volunteer.

The garden installation lasted for two days. The first day Home Depot rototilled land near the back patio and volunteer residents and the partners built wooden waist level raised beds. By having raised beds, CMHA can offer accessibility to residents that may not have the mobility to bend down to the ground to tend to plants. We filled the beds with soil and celebrated with grilling hot dogs, juice and healthy snacks.

The second day was the plant day. Many residents came out to help plant, get a little dirty and enjoy the beautiful sunshine. A few residents even brought out their house plants to get some professional help and to show off their knowledge. Seniors came down and some residents brought their grandchildren to help in the festivities. The planting included a variety of fruits and vegetables like squash, heirloom tomatoes, strawberries and an herb garden.

The festivities do not end with the installation of the garden. CMHA is offering lessons once a week for the residents to teach how to water, maintain and harvest the garden. Lutheran Hospital will be offering monthly healthy living education classes by professional nurses. Throughout the next year they will be offering health screening, food demonstrations and nutrition classes for all of the residents of Lakeview Tower.

The residents were very happy to see what their hard work accomplished and are anticipating the first bite of the first tomato of the season.

“A community garden can make the patio at Lakeview Tower beautiful and provide lots of wonderful produce. However, the real beauty is how a garden can bring our tenants together,” said Ms. Walker, manager of Lakeview Tower.