

# Firefly Scientists' Garden



Environmental Education at The Lemberg Children's Center

## AUGUST IN THE GARDEN

August was a busy month for all of us! Planting, exploring, and eating in the garden were how we spent much of our time. With the new school year beginning, we are excited to see how our outdoor space can provide a comforting reminder of all the fun that was had this summer, and all the fun that is still to come!

### Planting Garlic

The students have gotten great at planting seeds for new fruits and vegetables in the garden. We explored other ways to grow new plants, because our garlic plants bloomed this month! Inside the purple blooms are mini garlic cloves, which we planted together in our raised beds. It is fascinating to be able to see how the flowers at the top of a garlic plant connect down to the big garlic cloves and roots down below. The new garlic plants will grow new blooms, and we'll be able to plant those too!



*Planting garlic cloves together*

## Veggie Stamps



*Dipping our zucchini stamps in paint*

Not only are the vegetables in our garden delicious to eat, we can also use them for art projects! The zucchinis we grow in our garden have a lovely spongy texture on the inside that hold on to paint wonderfully, and make great stamps. We harvested and chopped up zucchini, dipped pieces in paint, and pressed them onto construction paper to make designs. It was great to explore the garden as a source of inspiration for creative and artistic projects, and use natural materials in new ways.



*Some paint got on our fingers, too!*

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## Garden Scavenger Hunt



*Meeting in the garden*

As the highschool students wrapped up their summer internship, we gathered one last time in the garden to do a scavenger hunt together! We worked together to find leaves of different shapes and sizes, edible plants, and plants that had each color of the rainbow. We of course made a stop at the worm bin as well to check on our wiggly friends.



*Feeding the worms together*



*Making potions with our scavenger hunt findings*

We are so proud of the friendships that bloomed this summer between our highschool interns and preschoolers. The two groups not only discussed our garden and topics such as pollination, they also spent time practicing their imaginative play skills, cooking or making potions with their findings.

## Making Cucumber Chips and Pesto Dip

The cooking this summer was not only pretend, though! Friends carefully helped us to pick basil from the garden, and inside the classroom we picked the leaves off of the stems. We mixed the basil with olive oil to make a delicious pesto dip. Sliced cucumbers freshly picked from the garden were perfect for dipping.

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*Preparing our pesto*

Making food from the garden is a great way for the children to see how the plants out in the garden become food on our table. It helps us all exercise patience, collaboration, and creativity. We work together to tend to our plants, and we also work together to harvest and prepare them. After lots of hard work and hot weather, some tasty snacks are so well appreciated!



*Cool as some cucumbers*

## Toddlers in the Garden

The toddlers, many of whom will transition to preschool or new classrooms this fall, have also had a great time in the garden this summer. Their happiness in the space is contagious! We have had so much fun trying all the different fruits and veggies together, and are looking forward to introducing the new students to weekly garden lessons.



*Looking for grapes and cucumbers on the vines*

## LEAF Youth Development Program

Our highschool program came to a close in the month of August, and we are so proud of how it turned out! Along with their work on Brandeis's campus, in the Stanley Elementary garden, and out in the city of Waltham, we can see the lasting impacts of their efforts around our own garden. Their work on construction projects such as arches to protect our strawberry bed will be a huge help for years to come in protecting the berries we love so much.

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*Drilling in arches*

The interns also did an incredible job of summarizing and showcasing their summer work through beautiful posters. These posters, explaining the importance of pollinators for our environment and our role in supporting them through our gardening, will be posted here at Lemberg as well as on Brandeis's campus. A huge thank you to the students and our garden team for all of their hard work, as well as the Firefly Foundation for their funding of this valuable program.



*Displaying a beautiful poster*

## Family Garden Days

We had two family garden days this month! Families helped to weed, prune, and water our plants, tied vines to a trellis, and harvested in abundance.



*A portion of our garden haul*



*Excited to take our harvest home*

Thank you so much to all who participated! We are so lucky to have such a supportive community, and are so happy to share this

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opportunity for environmental exploration with children and their families. Our next family garden day will be on **September 10th, from 9:30-11:30 am**. If you would like to participate or have any questions, feel free to contact Sylvia [skohnlevitt@brandeis.edu](mailto:skohnlevitt@brandeis.edu), the Environmental Education Associate Director.

As the new school year begins, we are looking forward to welcoming the children and their families back to the garden for activities and fall harvests.

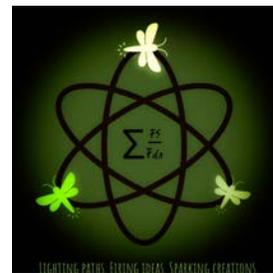
## Stanley Updates

Thanks to the watering system installed by the LEAF team, the Stanley Elementary garden has thrived despite continued dry weather through the month of August. The system uses drip irrigation to slowly supply water to the roots of the plants growing in our garden beds, so that water is used efficiently and not wasted, which is especially important as most of the commonwealth now faces drought conditions. Getting enough water to our plants has allowed us to harvest tomatoes, squash, cucumbers, kale, and more.



*Installing our water lines*

## Thank you to our 2022 donors!



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