

December 8, 2015

Dear Friends & Partners of East Capitol Urban Farm,

I hope you are having a wonderful Fall and you are enjoying the transformed space at 5900 East Capitol Street SE, WDC! Thank you so much for partnering with us on this initiative. We have made great progress in both physically enhancing the site and engaging the community and partners. Here is a breakdown of progress since our September 26, 2015, Build Day with the DC Building Industry Association (DCBIA):

- 27 garden plot applications have been reviewed and accepted
- 39 garden plot inquiries have been received, but applications have not been received from these inquirers
- Additional garden plots are allocated to the schools separately
- 22 new volunteers have committed to and completed the processes required to participate in an ongoing basis in the project
- Students from River Terrace (in partnership with Groundwork Anacostia) have engaged on site three times per week over the past few weeks.
- A community/site improvement day was conducted on December 4, 2015, where volunteers from 49 total volunteers, including, community members, Maya Angelou School's Young Adult Learning Center, Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), Groundwork Anacostia, and UDC. Volunteers:
 - Helped construct 20 additional raised beds
 - Planted all remaining shrubs and trees
 - Engaged students in learning about Urban Agriculture and Green Infrastructure
- Employed two UDC students to help operate the farm
- Begun preparing the site for the Art Sculpture
- The Ward 7 Artist has almost completed the wall mural

Whenever we have visitors at the site, one resounding theme has emerged: transformation. Each shared how impactful they believe the project is and will continue to be on the community.

Our next steps will be to continue the successes cited above, in addition to the following:

- Install the aquaponics system (funded by Sustainable DC + District Department of the Environment, DOEE)
- Assign, map, and label community gardening spaces

- Erect additional signage on site
- Schedule a Community Engagement Day on site during the second or third week in May
- Develop a quarterly schedule of training events on and near the site
- Begin planting and training opportunities in the late Winter (schedule will be released soon)
- Implement the proposed site management strategy (including on-site UDC staff)
- Work with community partners to “tell the story” of the community and the project

We are also incredibly excited to announce that UDC’s Food Truck (for education and training) will be in our possession by year end. The food truck will play an integral role in supporting East Capitol Urban Farm!

I am very encouraged by the overwhelming support from partners and the community. UDC and its partners look forward to continuing to improve the quality of life and economic prosperity of people and communities in the District of Columbia, the nation, and the world. “Healthy Cities-Healthy People.”

On Behalf of UDC CAUSES, the Center for Sustainable Development+ Partners,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Dwane Jones", with a large, stylized circular flourish behind the name.

Dwane Jones, Ph.D.
Director of the Center for Sustainable Development (UDC)