

## PEA GARDENS HELP LOCAL FOOD PANTRY

“Our mantra has been collaboration and multiple points of distribution, something that has gained new ground as traditional media outlets have run up against ever more constraints in resources,” Sawyer says. “We’re now partnering across the board—a recent example was the publication in *The Washington Post* of our report on Nigeria, assessing why Africa’s richest country is food-import dependent, and the broadcast that same day of a companion piece on *The News-Hour with Jim Lehrer*.”

The Center’s efforts have led to other unique partnerships and the recruitment of citizen journalists and aspiring reporters alike. On Helium.com, for example, people can participate in the Global Issues/Citizen Voices writing contests and respond to questions based on projects undertaken by the Pulitzer Center. On YouTube’s “Project: Report,” amateur journalists can enter a contest to create videos on unique news topics. The winners receive airtime on YouTube and reporting travel fellowships with the Pulitzer Center.

### FUTURE AUDIENCES

Educational outreach is a critical cog in the Pulitzer Center’s mission, according to Sawyer, who believes high school and college students “are the most important, ultimate audience. They are no longer—or never were—engaged in traditional news media.” To address that, the center implemented the Global Gateway ([pulitzergateway.org](http://pulitzergateway.org))—interactive Web portals that enable students not only to learn about food insecurity or climate change, for example, but also to connect with the journalists who cover those issues and to enter the dialogue by creating and posting their own videos or posing questions on the Web portals.

The Pulitzer Center’s Campus Consortium also provides a funding source for journalists to visit college and university campuses, inspiring, in part, the next generation of international reporters. Partner schools pay a fee for such visits, and that fee includes a Pulitzer campus liaison and funding for student fellowships.

On Sawyer’s docket of active projects are examinations of food insecurity, climate change, fragile states, women and children in crisis, and U.S. engagement in Afghanistan. Also upcoming is a Global Gateway portal on HIV/AIDS that will feature not only the HOPE project but also “Glass Closet,” an examination of homophobia and the stigma surrounding HIV/AIDS. The “Glass Closet” campaign first kicks off this fall as a four-part series on the public television program *WorldFocus*.

When asked to sum up why the multifaceted Pulitzer Center model seems to work as a catalyst for serious journalism and higher education, Sawyer says: “It’s the flip side of the news industry in crisis. The same Internet that has devoured the old model has also eliminated the barriers to entry and made distribution virtually cost-free, at the same time freeing us from the old constraints of news hole space and airtime. The only limits on experimentation and innovation are our own imaginations.”

The Farm and Garden Club has been giving away the farm—for a worthy cause. This year, club members have offered weekly baskets of fruits and vegetables harvested from Academy gardens to St. Vincent de Paul Society Exeter NH Conference, an area-wide food pantry.

The pantry is a member of The Giving Gardens Network, a collection of home gardeners, farmers and organizations that support the donation of locally-grown, fresh surplus food to area pantries and shelters. The network’s creator, Christopher Skoglund ’93, reached out to his old graduate school classmate and “green” neighbor, PEA Sustainability Education Coordinator Jennifer Wilhelm, to get Exeter involved.

“Chris approached me about the idea of Exeter donating food earlier last school year,” Wilhelm says. “He knew we had a community garden that the students worked with and suggested we take the next step of sharing our crop. I really like the idea of Exeter students being involved in community outreach, growing food on campus and giving it to those in need locally. This experience offers many opportunities to learn about organic agriculture [and] community service.”

Starting in June, a large basket of vegetables was delivered to St. Vincent de Paul every Monday. While school was not in session, faculty and staff members answered the call. Math Instructor Patricia Babecki volunteered to support the initiative because she enjoys working outside.

“The weather certainly didn’t cooperate in June and July, but I found weeding especially relaxing,” Babecki says. “It was also fun to see the new growth and the first harvesting.”

More than a dozen baskets of peas, radishes, beets and other vegetables have been delivered to the pantry since harvesting began. In late summer, the garden also yielded cabbages, tomatoes, peppers, eggplants, green beans and salad greens. “This past summer, our greens did well,” Wilhelm says. “We also donated a variety of herbs, broccoli, leeks, onions, garlic, carrots, and red and gold potatoes.”

Soon after the start of school, Farm and Garden Club students returned to the garden and took over the picking and delivery of crops. “I’m excited that the students are back and getting in the groove of tending the garden regularly,” Wilhelm says. “I’m also looking forward to them making donations and experiencing another aspect of *non sibi*.”

—Famebridge Witherspoon



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