

JULY 2014

THE DORNSIFE CONNECTOR



TURNIP

THE

BEET

The raised vegetable beds on the Dornsife Center's lawn are often the first thing visitors see. Meet the team who are managing this work of heart.

Christian Brown and Lindsay Bushong

EDITOR'S WELCOME

Dear friends and neighbors,

Well, we've been open a whole month now and already our program partners have begun building a wonderful set of activities. KEYSPOOT training opportunities have expanded, the vegetables in the garden are gangbusters, and we've hosted some terrific engaging discussions about local history and standardized testing, just to name a few.

This is our second issue of the Dornsife Connector and we hope you enjoy it. We'll be using this publication to showcase both the people and the programs that make the Dornsife Center tick. We welcome your submissions - prose, poetry, or images - and look forward to showing off your work as well.

EVENTS

COMMUNITY DINNERS

**First Tuesday of each month
6:00 p.m.**

Share a meal with members of the Powelton Village, Mantua, and Drexel communities..

NEIGHBORHOOD WALK AND TALK

**Every Wednesday
10:00 a.m.**

Open to everyone. Let's move together!

HARVEST DAYS

**Select Saturdays: July 26, August 9, August 23, September 6
10:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.**

Help with garden maintenance, and go home with fresh vegetables.



STAFF MEMBER SPOTLIGHT

Name: Jerry Fuller
Job: Facilities Manager
Hometown: West Philadelphia
Current residence: East Mount Airy
Favorite Sports: Baseball and football
Favorite Food: Steak (well done)

What is your job?

I take care of the Dornsife Center - setting up for events, overseeing the housekeeping, making sure all the mechanicals are working...just about everything that goes into keeping the buildings running smoothly.

Where will we find you at the Dornsife Center?

All over the place! If you need find me, Dominique can call me on the radio. My radio handle is "Swiss Cheese!"

What is your favorite thing about the Dornsife Center?

History is my favorite subject, and I love the history of the Dornsife Center property as well as the programs we'll be providing for the community.

What do you do when you're not at work?

I spend time with my family - my wife and my three daughters.

SUCCESS STORY WITH CHANDA RICE

What brought you to the Dornsife Center?

I was invited by K. Rose Samuel-Evans in the hopes of fulfilling a dream.

What program(s) did you participate in?

KEYSPOT, Clarifi financial education workshops, and the Neighborhood History Exchange.

What was the most useful thing about the program?

KEYSPOT has been the most useful because it helped me to zone in on my writing skills.

Is there anything that surprised you about the Dornsife Center?

Getting the chance to meet David and Dana Dornsife and speaking so highly of them and not knowing they were in the room. My appreciation and gratitude for their work.

What are you working on now at KEYSPOT, and what are your goals?

Since my arrival I have written two plays and am currently working on a video game. My goal is to write more plays, continue to zone in on my writing skills, and feed people.

What would you say to neighbors who might be interested in Dornsife Center programs?

Be ready to grow!



ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH INFO SESSIONS

Are you interested in how our health and the environment are connected? Join Ali Kenner on the last Wednesday of every month from 4:00 - 5:30 pm to discuss and learn about environmental health issues local to Philadelphia. Info sessions are open to all community members. Come learn about current environmental health problems, how they are being addressed, and to discuss problems facing Philadelphia communities.

Ali Kenner is an assistant professor in the Department of History and Politics. She is affiliated with Drexel's Center for Science, Technology, and Society and her work focuses on asthma and air quality, as well as other environmental health problems. You can visit her research website at www.envirohealthsense.org

DREXEL'S STUDENT FARMERS

LINDSAY BUSHONG

I'm organized and methodical, so usually I do most of the planning and organizing surrounding the garden. I work a lot with the other organizations and individuals involved, and I make sure we're staying on schedule. I love pruning tomatoes! I find it very meditative. Favorite veggies are radishes and cucumbers - I love to pickle everything! Least favorite pests are aphids. They get in your face when you bend down towards the plants and they're everywhere and just really obnoxious.

An exciting moment for me in the garden was seeing one of my neighbors from Haverford Avenue. Gardening has been a great way to get to know the neighborhood and truly meet residents in the area. Once my neighbor and I realized that we recognized and knew each other, we continued to say hello whenever we saw each other on the street. The garden helped to start this relationship that never would have happened otherwise. This is really one of our most prominent goals for the garden, to break down barriers between neighbors. Gardening side by side with your neighbors really allows you to create a connection, and understanding, that lasts even after you leave the plots.

CHRISTIAN BROWN

What I love most about the garden is meeting strangers and engaging in conversation. Every time I work in the garden someone walks by and stops to ask what I'm doing. They usually start telling some sort of story and will talk for as long as I'm willing to listen. I learn something from everyone I talk with, whether it's about the history of the community or gardening techniques that their family used to practice.

I've always enjoyed building things and am usually responsible for any design or construction work that needs to be done in the garden. I also like to study the plants and try to figure out why they are the way they are. For example, I pay attention to plants that are receiving more or less sunlight, water, etc. and observe the differences. We usually fertilize the soil when we plant seedlings, but sometimes it's necessary to add nutrients to the soil later in the season, depending on the health of the plants.

My favorite plants are definitely tomatoes. Nothing beats a fresh, ripe, sweet tomato picked right off the vine. They are entirely different than any tomato you'll find in a grocery store, which to me have always seemed bland and flavorless. My least favorite pest is the cabbage moth. They are not too difficult to find, all you have to do is look for a cabbage with holes on the leaves and there is almost always a cabbage



Ted Green

moth larvae hidden somewhere in the plant. If left unchecked, these cute little guys will easily devour much of the cabbage.

TED GREEN

One of my favorite moments with the garden took place last year before the autumn planting. We picked all the unripened green tomatoes to make room for new crops, and despite giving away several shopping bags worth at the weekly harvest day (every other Saturday), we were still left with nearly a cooler filled of green tomatoes. Being a culinary student at Drexel, it gave me the opportunity to play around with fried green tomatoes, sweet chutney, and pizzas. The best part, however, was the profuse smell that greeted me upon returning to my apartment, emitted from the green tomatoes as they slowly matured and softened into ripe reds.

Watching the development of the garden through the season is my greatest joy. There's nothing more rewarding than seeing a small sown seed grow into a whopping radish the size of an apple! Because I live in the neighborhood, getting up at 6am, brewing a cup of coffee and going out to water the garden has become a welcomed ritual. We'll use Saturdays to get our hands dirty; pulling weeds, thinning plants and pruning to keep the garden full and flourishing. My favorite food from the garden is definitely the tomatoes. When they're in abundance, not only are they a tasty treat to share, but the ogling faces on passers-by at the 6-foot behemoths is both amusing and satisfying as a job well-done. Slugs are my scourge because of the damage they do, not only to tender leafy greens, but most garden plants.



VISIT
DORNSIFE.DREXEL.EDU

CALL
215.571.4013

STOP BY
3509 SPRING GARDEN ST
PHILADELPHIA, PA 19104