



AMERICAN UNIVERSITY

# NUTRITION EDUCATION FORUM REPORT

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APRIL 2025



COLLEGE of ARTS & SCIENCES

**HEALTHY SCHOOLS,  
HEALTHY COMMUNITIES**

Cultivating an equitable food system in DC.

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## MORNING PANEL

The morning session offered a panel discussion entitled, ***“Creating Community and Expanding Access,”*** moderated by Dr. Edrin Williams. Dr. Williams is the Program Manager and Development Officer at Leadership Council for Healthy Communities, as well as adjunct faculty at American University.

Additional panelists included:

- Beth Bacon, Director of Education at FRESHFARM,
- Jo-Ann Jolly, Division Chief overseeing Prevention within the District of Columbia Department of Health’s Health Promotion and Disease Prevention Bureau, and
- Robin McClave, Program Director of the AU HSHC lab (HPM Alum 2009).

The panelists discussed changes that have impacted how Nutrition Education (NE) is delivered due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The conversation also covered how NE is evolving to increase reach, providing evidence-based and science-supported information. Panelists also shared factors that facilitate successful programming, emphasizing responsiveness to local needs, strong partnerships with community-based organizations, and repeatedly and consistently showing up as a committed partner.

To continue to have an impact, partnerships with government, healthcare and schools will ensure nutrition educators remain trusted messengers, and opportunities on the horizon include the expansion of Food is Medicine programs, grocery store nutrition education, and building on the connections between food and community.



Pictured (L - R): Panelists Jo-Ann Jolly, Robin McClave, Beth Bacon, and Dr. Edrin Williams



## GALLERY WALK

The Gallery Walk was comprised of ten community partners that were invited to share posters summarizing aspects of their nutrition education programs.

This took place after the panel, affording attendees and participants time to network and connect over ideas on how to amplify each other's work.

### The Gallery Walk presenters were:

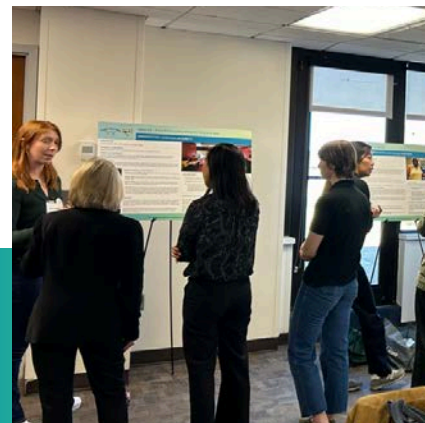
- American University's Food Matters Program
- Capital Area Food Bank
- CentroNía
- FRESHFARM
- Friends of the National Arboretum
- Leadership Council for Healthy Communities
- Martha's Table
- Mary's Center
- University of the District of Columbia's SNAP-Ed Program
- YMCA of Metropolitan Washington

Prior to the forum, specific questions were asked of partners, and the HSHC Lab team developed posters for each participating organization.

### The topics highlighted included:

- Who the nutrition education program(s) serve and how they are reached
- What the program impacts are
- What has been learned from the evaluations conducted
- What makes the work unique and valuable
- Opportunities for collaboration with the program(s)

*See Appendix A for all posters.*





# GALLERY WALK HIGHLIGHTS

The summary below represents the top themes across the ten nutrition education programs who participated in the 2025 Gallery Walk.

## Audience

Primary population served by nutrition education program (% of organizations)

**30%** Low-Income Residents

**30%** Residents in Wards 7 & 8

**30%** Seniors Aged 55-60+

## Objectives

Intended impact of program



Increase Consumption of Healthy Foods



Improve Nutritional Literacy



Increase Access to Healthy Foods

## Educational Strategies

Methods used to deliver nutrition education



Hands-On Learning



Providing Handouts & Reinforcement Materials



"Training the Trainer"

## Evaluation

Tools and approaches used to measure program effectiveness (% of organizations)



Tracking Attendance & Participation **60%**



Open-Ended Feedback From Participants **50%**



Post-Surveying **40%**

## Program Changes & Improvements

Modifications made in response to feedback and community needs

Expanded Partnerships

Enhanced Accessibility to Services

[View the entire Comparison Chart here](#)

Credit: Grace Stevens, HSHC Graduate Research Assistant

## LUNCH & GROUP DISCUSSION

A lunchtime discussion followed the gallery walk and further shared the experiences of attendees around serving and responding to the needs of the communities they serve, the connections between education and access, and involving the community in the development and implementation of programs.

Attendees were seated at round tables and encouraged to converse over lunch. The prompts were:

- Introduce yourself.
- What brings you here today?
- What were some things of interest that you took from a gallery walk? Why?

To conclude, each table designated a speaker to summarize what was learned during the gallery walk for the rest of the room. Key takeaways included:

### **Accessibility:**

- Nutrition education is less impactful without access to nutritious foods. Whenever possible, participants should be exposed to new and unfamiliar foods. Recipe demonstration and in-person tactile learning are impactful for all populations.
- Programs should include a reasonable amount of digestible material. Incentives that are aligned with participants' needs (i.e., electric vegetable choppers for seniors) increase accessibility. Many programs also serve as social experiences, combatting isolation and loneliness.

### **Partnerships:**

- Assumptions about fellow stakeholders' capabilities and program participants' knowledge should be challenged. For example, Community Health Workers can translate evidence-based nutrition education to their communities rather than solely relying upon nutritionists and dietitians.
- Reliance on volunteerism can be a challenge for many organizations. Reframing this work from transactional to one of mutual aid can encourage engagement and retention.

## AFTERNOON SESSION

The afternoon session, “***Training the Modern Nutrition Educator from Theory to Practice***,” was led by Dr. Dara Ford, Program Director for the MS in Nutrition Education Program, and Dr. Evan Reister, Professional Lecturer in the Department of Health Studies.

Drs. Ford and Reister identified components of programs featured in the gallery walk that demonstrate best practices for nutrition education. They then connected the components to examples from organizations in the room, inviting them to share about their program best practices.

### **Needs Assessments:**

*Capital Area Food Bank* – Developed a large-scale pilot program, Silver Market, based on survey feedback they received from seniors reporting that they want more produce and protein options. Additionally, focus groups with seniors assessed their experiences with the program as well as details about their eating habits and preferences for future offerings.

### **Goal and Objective Development:**

*Friends of the National Arboretum* – Using the logic model framework, they identified short, medium, and long-term goals to guide program planning and measure progress toward their desired outcomes.

### **Educational Strategies:**

*University of the District of Columbia* – UDC employs a train-the-trainer model to broaden their overall impact. In collaboration with DC Central Kitchen, they offer virtual store trainings focused on providing practical knowledge to benefit customers – for instance, demonstrating how to properly cut and eat a papaya.

### **Theory Application:**

*Martha’s Table* – Martha’s Table utilizes the Social-Ecological Model for Change, which addresses the four levels of influence on health behaviors: individual, family, community, and systems. At the individual level, they equip participants with practical skills like cooking techniques and guidance on how to use the fresh produce they receive. At the family level, they encourage caregivers and adults to prepare healthy recipes at home with their children. On the community level, they partner with schools and local organizations to enhance the food environment and increase access to nutrition options. At the systems level, they engage with both local and federal food access partners to drive broader change.

### **Evaluation:**

*Leadership Council for Healthy Communities* – LCHC administers pre- and post-surveys, as part of the evidence-based SNAP-Ed curriculum Create Better Health, to assess participant experiences – such as nutrition knowledge and health behaviors – during their nutrition education classes.

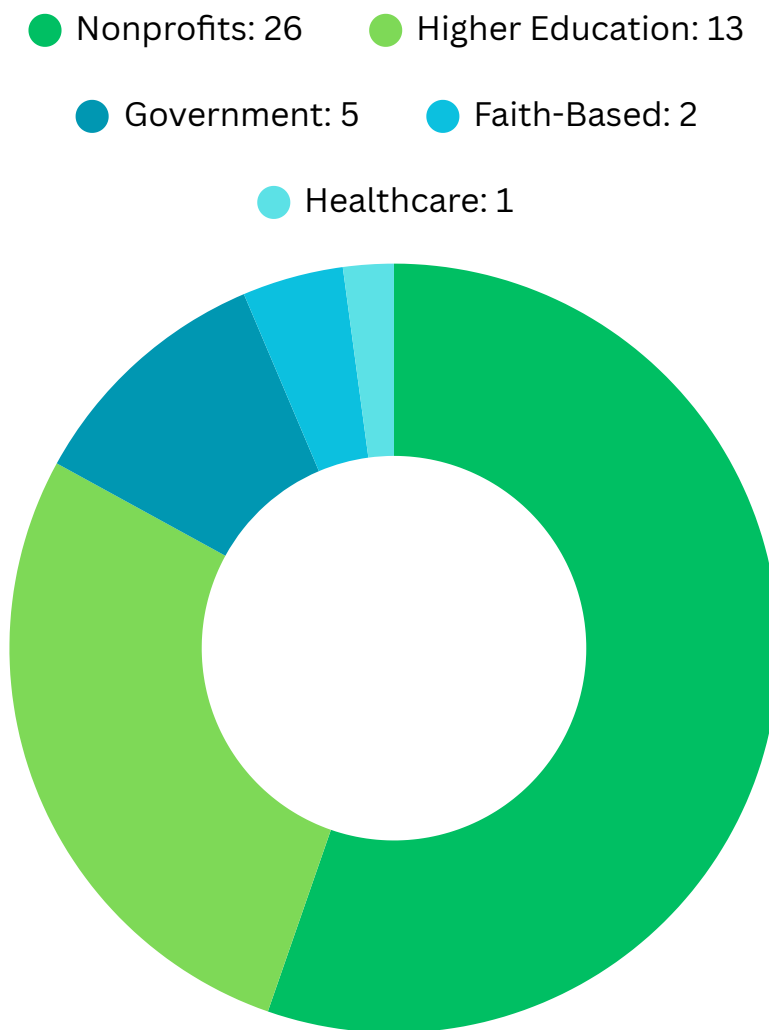
### **Program Modifications:**

*Mary’s Center* – Through their programming, they have recognized that nutrition education often takes a back seat when individuals are facing other challenges, like housing instability. In response, they have introduced virtual classes that have fostered the growth of online communities. Their program succeeds in part due to regular check-ins with participants, ensuring holistic support and care for each participant.

## EVALUATION

The Nutrition Education Forum hosted **47 attendees** and had representation from more than **20 organizations**.

Participants came together from organization across five diverse sectors, including nonprofits, higher education, the government, healthcare, and faith-based groups all with a connection to nutrition education.



### Most Valuable Aspects Highlighted by Participants:

- Gaining insights into organizations engaged in similar work
- The opportunity to connect with different groups for potential collaboration and support
- Networking with like-minded professionals in the field of nutrition education




## Appendix A: Galley Walk Posters

◦ <u>American University's Food Matters Program</u>	A.1
◦ <u>Capital Area Food Bank</u>	A.1
◦ <u>CentroNía</u>	A.2
◦ <u>FRESHFARM</u>	A.2
◦ <u>Friends of the National Arboretum</u>	A.3
◦ <u>Leadership Council for Healthy Communities</u>	A.3
◦ <u>Martha's Table</u>	A.4
◦ <u>Mary's Center</u>	A.4
◦ <u>University of the District of Columbia's SNAP-Ed Program</u>	A.5
◦ <u>YMCA of Metropolitan Washington</u>	A.5

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<b>Appendix C: Nutrition Education Forum Program</b>	<b>B.1</b>
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## American University | SNAP-Ed: Food Matters



### SNAP-Ed – Food Matters: Nourishing the Body and Soul


**ORGANIZATION: AMERICAN UNIVERSITY**

**PRESENTER**  
Brogan Madden, MS, CHES; Jessica Yamamoto, MSNE

**PRIORITY AUDIENCE**  
SNAP recipients or SNAP eligible individuals who reside in Wards 4, 5, 7, or 8

**NEEDS ASSESSMENT**  
A needs assessment and SWOT analysis were conducted in Year 1. Building off the findings, the team developed a curriculum based on existing SNAP-Ed curricula best suited to address the gaps within nutritional literacy and nutrition-related behaviors among the priority population.

**OBJECTIVES**  
Increase knowledge and awareness about food and nutrition and empower participants to make changes to support healthy eating and shopping. Alongside community champions, Food Matters works to improve overall health and wellbeing within Ward 4, 5, 7 & 8 through nutrition education and interactive planning and goal setting amongst a “food-focused” community of peers.



**EDUCATIONAL STRATEGIES**

- **Point-of-purchase (POP) programming:** Free nutrition education about a specific topic at food retail and food access sites.
- **Nutrition Bites:** 30-minute online nutrition education events that focus on a variety of nutrition topics such as added sugars, sodium intake, building a better bowl, and busting nutrition myths.
- **Nutrition Blasts:** 1-hour single session classes cover foundational nutrition education topics such as MyPlate, the food groups, and understanding the nutrition facts label. Classes include activities and prizes for participants.
- **4-Week Series:** 90-minute nutrition education classes held weekly for four weeks at a consistent location. Participants are provided with a recipe and sample at the end of each class along with the ingredients and kitchen tools needed to make the recipe at home, thus reinforcing the content covered in class while simultaneously improving the self-efficacy of the participants to make the targeted behavior changes. Those who attend all four classes receive a “Food Matters Ambassadors” certificate.

**THEORY**  
The Social Ecological model, which affirms the important connectivity between individual, community, organizational, and systems level influences on health, was the foundational framework for our multi-level approach to nutrition education. Food Matters delivers individual nutrition education at POP events as well as group education in our Bites, Blasts and Series classes.


Through sustained partnerships with non-profit community-based organizations and government-level practitioners of community health, health-equity planning and wellness initiatives, Food Matters has been able to embed nutrition education into a variety of environments and settings.

**EVALUATION**

- Participation is tracked at every event by means of a head count. At POP events, participation is also documented for short and long interactions.
- Insightful and relevant comments made by participants are documented in a google form.
- Pre- and post-surveys are administered during the 4-week series class in class 1 and 4.
  - When new participants join the class, they are provided with a pre-survey regardless of what class number they joined. Surveys measure behavior change related to food consumption habits and other key shopping habits such as: consumption of fruits and vegetables, consumption of sugar-sweetened beverages, stretching food dollars, choosing foods based on MyPlate, using the nutrition facts label, shopping with a grocery list, and following USDA food safety guidelines.

**PROGRAM CHANGES & IMPROVEMENTS**  
Year 1 focused on researching the needs of our target population, identifying the right evidenced-based curriculum to meet the needs of our population and launching the original formats of nutrition education: POP events and the series class. In Year 2, we developed new POP topics to keep our events interesting to repeat participants as well as expanding our partnerships to include food access sites such as Martha's Table and Bread for The City and new food retail outlets such as Giant in addition to Safeway, which was the original partner in Year 1.

We also introduced a new format of nutrition education, which is a single session class which we debuted at senior dining sites including So Others Might Eat and Kenilworth Recreation Center. In Year 3, we acquired new partnerships with organizations such as Capital Area Food Bank, UPO, Seabury Resources for Aging and Iona. Our team also expanded programming to Wards 4 and 5, and introduced an online format for programming known as “Nutrition Bites”.

 Visit [american.edu/cas/healthyschools/healthy-communities.cfm](https://american.edu/cas/healthyschools/healthy-communities.cfm) to learn more.

Nutrition Education Forum | Spring 2025

## Capital Area Food Bank | Silver Market



### Silver Market

**ORGANIZATION: CAPITAL AREA FOOD BANK**

**PRESENTER**  
Tori Chow, Wendy Wang, Cece Chisholm, and Laurie Farmer

**PRIORITY AUDIENCE**  
Income eligible seniors ages 55 and over

**NEEDS ASSESSMENT**  
The 2022 Older Adult Survey was administered to include participants from our Senior Brown Bag program of over twenty years. Methods included focus groups and surveys. Results indicated our seniors wanted access to more fresh produce and frozen protein, rather than only shelf-stable items, as well as, wanting the opportunity to select foods based on cultural dietary, and health preferences. Silver Market is a pilot program developed in response to that. Income eligible seniors can select from 5-6 different types of fresh fruits and vegetables, in addition to, 1-2 protein items each month at no cost.

**OBJECTIVES**

- To provide monthly indoor market-style distribution to income eligible seniors 55 and over
- To provide more of what seniors want through a choice model that respects their autonomy and dietary preferences
- To implement an appointment-based system with appointments available at half-hour intervals to avoid lengthy wait times and long lines
- To collaborate with community partners to provide nutrition education and resources for seniors



**EDUCATIONAL STRATEGIES**  
At every Silver Market, we have at least 2-3 vendors that set up a table to provide resources such as flyers with nutrition and food storage information, recipe cards, and information about other relevant DC programs. The CAFB Nutrition Education Department provides a tasting of a recipe based on that month's offerings at every market. This is so our participants not only receive food that is beneficial for their health, but know how to prepare nutritionally balanced meals with it as well.

Our vendors have also included Friendship Bench DC, DC Hunger Solutions, the Food Matters team at American University, and The American Diabetes Association with Black Nurses Rock. In the upcoming months, we hope to feature Kaiser Permanente's mobile health van for health screenings.

**THEORY**

- A rubric with our ideal partner characteristics informed decisions on site selection
- Survey feedback and anecdotal experiences from senior participants to inform our program design and make decisions about scaling and improving the program (program pilot evaluation)
- Our seniors programs primarily serve residential communities but through Silver Market, we hope to expand to more sites open to the community



**EVALUATION**  
Through our intake system, Service Insights, we can capture participants' profile (required by the state agency) and market attendance behavior. Surveys and focus groups gather feedback on:

- The quality of Silver Market through
  - Shopping experience
  - Food distributed
- Impact of Silver Market on clients through
  - Barriers to food access
  - Nutritional knowledge and consumption behavior
  - Ability to use food to reflect their identities (cultural, religious, or otherwise)
  - Social-emotional well-being
- How resource-intensive Silver Market is in terms of
  - Staff time and overall cost
  - Scaling and expansion

**PROGRAM CHANGES & IMPROVEMENTS**  
Silver Market supports a healthy choice model for seniors concentrating on fresh fruits, vegetables, and frozen protein. Since launching in July 2024, we have conducted partner trainings for staff and volunteers, as well as integrated Service Insights into our program model to support an appointment-based system while better understanding market attendance behaviors. From July 2024 to March 2025, Silver Market has served 580 unique senior households.





With the success of Silver Market, we hope to establish more community sites based on this healthy choice model in the Washington Metropolitan area.

 Visit [capitalareafoodbank.org/](https://capitalareafoodbank.org/) to learn more.

Nutrition Education Forum | Spring 2025



## CentroNía | Early Childhood Food and Wellness Program





	<h3>Early Childhood Food and Wellness Program</h3> <p><b>ORGANIZATION: CENTRONÍA</b></p>	
<p><b>PRESENTER</b> Victoria Reis, Food and Wellness Program Manager</p>		
<p><b>PRIORITY AUDIENCE</b> Young children, families, and caregivers, particularly from low-income and immigrant communities</p>		
<p><b>NEEDS ASSESSMENT</b> A combination of community engagement and assessment of the health and wellness challenges faced by families in the target population</p>		
<p><b>OBJECTIVES</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To offer fresh, healthy, and daily in-house cooked meals, prepared by NiaCentral Catering</li> <li>To improve the nutrition knowledge and active living of young children and their families</li> <li>To increase physical activity levels among children and their families</li> <li>To foster long-term habits of healthy eating and active living</li> <li>To foster a culture of Health and Wellness across our sites, limiting highly processed and allergenic foods</li> <li>To ensure that teachers and staff also practice these health eating and active living habits</li> </ul>		
	<p><b>EDUCATIONAL STRATEGIES</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Format:</b> Interactive workshops, food samples, cooking demonstrations, and hands-on activities for children and their caregivers or in the classroom.</li> <li><b>Frequency:</b> Once a month or aligned with major Family and Community Engagement events</li> <li><b>Handouts and Giveaways:</b> Nutritious recipe cards, physical activity tips, health-related handouts, and fresh produce or kitchen tools to encourage participation based on available funds and grants.</li> </ul>	<p><b>EVALUATION</b></p> <p>During enrollment period, parents complete various Health Forms that collect information about diet changes, including any disabilities, and other wellness related needs. During community events and cooking classes, we evaluate progress and satisfaction through deeper engagement activities with the parents and guardians, offering, whenever available, stipends for families to purchase produce from local farmer's markets and Community Supported Agriculture (CSAs).</p>
<p><b>THEORY</b></p> <p>CentroNía designs solutions to meet the needs of our priority audience who hail from vulnerable and marginalized communities. By following the Children and Adult Food Program (CACFP) requirements, the Food and Wellness Program can be dynamic and creative with nutrition education and activities.</p>	<p><b>PROGRAM CHANGES &amp; IMPROVEMENTS</b></p> <p>CentroNía is a CACFP sponsor, with their staff responsible for providing fresh food cooked in-house and closed program supervision. Food and Wellness Program policy directly aligns with CACFP. Having dedicated staff improves the quality of the work provided for our children, with more monitoring, nutrition education activities, and varied and rich menus.</p> <p>The program not only focuses on early childhood but also on building lasting partnerships with families and local organizations. This collaborative approach ensures that the program's impact extends beyond just the children, helping to create a broader community-wide culture of health and wellness.</p>	
<div>  <a href="https://visit.centronia.org/programs/food-and-wellness-to-learn-more">Visit <a href="https://visit.centronia.org/programs/food-and-wellness-to-learn-more">centronia.org/programs/food-and-wellness-to-learn-more</a></a> <span>Nutrition Education Forum   Spring 2025</span> </div>		

## FRESHFARM | FoodPrints

	<h3>FoodPrints</h3> <p><b>ORGANIZATION: FRESHFARM</b></p>	
<p><b>PRESENTER</b> Beth Bacon, Regina Green, and Hannah Schiff</p>		
<p><b>PRIORITY AUDIENCE</b> Public elementary school communities, primarily in underserved areas of the District</p>		
<p><b>NEEDS ASSESSMENT</b></p> <p>Historically underserved communities have high rates of food insecurity, fewer resources to buy new types of foods to try, and less fresh produce readily available. FoodPrints addresses these needs by providing students, staff, and families with positive experiences with fresh, local, nutritious food. The program increases access to these foods through culinary education; easy, low-cost nutritious recipes; plentiful food in the classroom; an edible school garden; and fresh produce to take home.</p>		
<p><b>OBJECTIVES</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Get students excited about growing, preparing and enjoying fresh, seasonal foods.</li> <li>Bring science, math, and social studies to life through hands-on experiences with cooking and gardening.</li> <li>Improve health outcomes of children and families.</li> </ul>		
	<p><b>EDUCATIONAL STRATEGIES</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Our educators are embedded in our partner school communities.</li> <li>Hands-on learning experiences for students in the garden and kitchen classroom</li> <li>Cooking and gardening to bring learning science, math, and social studies to life</li> <li>"In-school Field Trip" Model: lessons from FoodPrints's interdisciplinary, standards-based, elementary food and garden education curriculum</li> <li>Sustained programming over time: all students in our partner elementary schools participate every 4-6 weeks throughout their elementary school career</li> </ul>	<p><b>EVALUATION</b></p> <p>Data collected includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Number of sessions, lessons taught, recipes prepared, and items grown/harvested in school gardens</li> <li>Students' perceptions of the program and levels of familiarity with featured produce items</li> <li>Fruit and vegetable intake</li> <li>Skills, knowledge, and empowerment to make informed food choices</li> </ul> <p>As a result of FoodPrints, our students:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Are more likely to be familiar with and choose fresh, nutritious food</li> <li>Increased their vegetable consumption over the course of the school year</li> <li>Are highly willing to try new foods, and are regularly involved in food preparation at home</li> <li>Build social-emotional skills, including teamwork, communication, and self-efficacy</li> <li>Experience lasting effects of the program into young adulthood.</li> </ul>
<p><b>THEORY</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Hands-on education is the best way to spark curiosity and excitement for eating and enjoying fresh, nutritious foods – while supporting academic learning and strengthening the school community.</li> <li>Research on the way repeated positive exposure to whole, fresh fruits and vegetables increases the likelihood of a person to want to cook and eat fresh produce in the future. Our Grow, Cook, Eat, Learn model creates these positive repeated exposures with embedded and sustained food education.</li> </ul>	<p><b>PROGRAM CHANGES &amp; IMPROVEMENTS</b></p> <p>FoodPrints was started in 2005; it has since grown to 21 DC public schools and serves 8,000 students across the city. Our program has made important changes to meet this level of growth in the last few years. To provide our team of 28 teachers with the resources they need to teach, cook, and garden successfully with PreK - 5th grade students, our team of Instructional Coaches and Garden Managers provide expertise and ongoing professional development for staff.</p> <p>Collaboration with FRESHFARM's procurement and delivery infrastructure increases access to fresh, local food for our school communities: about 24,000 pounds of local produce will be used for cooking, eating and learning in our classes and family events this school year. This organizational collaboration both supports the regional food system and increases food access.</p>	
<div>  <a href="https://visit.freshfarm.org/foodprints-to-learn-more">Visit <a href="https://visit.freshfarm.org/foodprints-to-learn-more">freshfarm.org/foodprints-to-learn-more</a></a> <span>Nutrition Education Forum   Spring 2025</span> </div>		



# Friends of the National Arboretum | School Garden Support Program

		<h2>School Garden Support Program</h2>	
<p><b>ORGANIZATION: FRIENDS OF THE NATIONAL ARBORETUM</b></p>			
<p><b>PRESENTER</b></p> <p>Ashley Rattanawan and Mykaela Brevard</p>			
<p><b>PRIORITY AUDIENCE</b></p> <p>D.C. Educators/School Staff who work at schools who serve low-income families (Title I Eligible Schools)</p>			
<p><b>NEEDS ASSESSMENT</b></p> <p>Through our application and initial meetings, school teams share with us why it's important to them to have a garden at their school, how the garden is currently used, what their team wants to accomplish in the school year, and what resources / partners / assets they already have at their school that can help accomplish their goal.</p>			
<p><b>OBJECTIVES</b></p> <p><b>Short term:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Educators feel confident utilizing the outdoor classroom and school garden to teach standards-based lessons</li> <li>More teachers provide 10+ hours of garden-based education</li> </ul> <p><b>Mid-term:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Under-resourced school gardens are sustainably run by school communities, and used regularly to teach, learn and gather.</li> <li>A network and community of garden educators supports garden-based education in DC</li> </ul> <p><b>Long-term:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Students are more engaged through outdoor, experiential learning, more comfortable in nature, and more willing to try fruits and vegetables.</li> </ul>		<p><b>EVALUATION</b></p> <p>Our evaluation questions that we measure through a program tracking tool and participant surveys:</p> <p><b>Participation:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>What are the characteristics of FONA's program participants and partner schools? (How many students &amp; schools)</li> <li>To what extent are teachers and students participating in garden-based education, including in the classroom, in their school garden, and/or on field trips? (Asking how many participating students received 10+ hours of garden-based education)</li> </ul> <p><b>Satisfaction:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To what extent are participants (teachers, students, and partners) satisfied with the Educator Coaching Program? (Asking if participants would recommend the program)</li> </ul> <p><b>Goal Completion:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To what extent are schools meeting their goals to advance their school gardens and/or improve their garden-based education? (Recording how many schools complete 50%+ of their 2-4 annual goals)</li> </ul> <p><b>Attitude, Behavior Change, &amp; Knowledge:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To what extent are schools increasing their commitment to, and use of, their school garden? (Recording if their school garden team grew &amp; Asking if their garden is used more than last year)</li> <li>To what extent are staff reporting changes in knowledge, skill, and intention to continue garden use as a result of the Educator Coaching Program?</li> </ul>	
		<p><b>EDUCATIONAL STRATEGIES</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Structured trainings with free supplies (e.g., incentives, tools) to help teachers</li> <li>One week-long in summer and four throughout the school year</li> <li>Hands-on (experiential)</li> <li>Garden-based</li> <li>Varying the modality (e.g., musical, kinesthetic, interpersonal, visual, mathematical, intrapersonal, linguistic, naturalist)</li> <li>Using all five senses to engage</li> <li>Collaborating (e.g., building curriculum/learning objectives together)</li> <li>Relational/community building</li> </ul> <p><b>THEORY</b></p> <p>We developed a logic model with several core assumptions that school gardens and nutrition education are more sustainable and effective when the program:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Works with rather than for</li> <li>Shares power</li> <li>Empowers and builds strengths within the existing community</li> </ul>	
		<p><a href="http://Visit.fona.org/school-gardens/">Visit fona.org/school-gardens/ to learn more.</a></p>	
<p>Nutrition Education Forum   Spring 2025</p>			

# Leadership Council for Healthy Communities | Nutrition Education Workshops

		<h2>Nutrition Education Workshops</h2>	
<p><b>ORGANIZATION: LEADERSHIP COUNCIL FOR HEALTHY COMMUNITIES</b></p>			
<p><b>PRESENTER</b></p> <p>Dr. Edrin R. Williams, Chief Development Officer</p>			
<p><b>PRIORITY AUDIENCE</b></p> <p>African Americans; Families in multi-unit housing developments; Faith institutions (Wards 7 &amp; 8 emphasis)</p>			
<p><b>NEEDS ASSESSMENT</b></p> <p>The needs were identified through community engagement, input from LCHC's Community Health Hub (CHH) coalition (Ounce of Care &amp; Arcadia's Mobile Market), and partnering faith institutions.</p>			
<p><b>OBJECTIVES</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increase knowledge and participation in nutrition, meal planning, and cooking among families by engaging families in weekly workshops</li> <li>Enhance awareness and utilization of nutrition and food access resources within the community</li> <li>Promote the use of food vouchers/ incentives &amp; community-based food programs to improve food security for families</li> </ul>		<p><b>EVALUATION</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Participant Data:</b> Measured via pre- and post-survey assessments on nutrition knowledge and other topics</li> <li><b>Community Impact:</b> Measured via the number of individuals accessing nutrition resources and food assistance programs and those who attend the nutrition education workshops</li> </ul>	
		<p><b>EDUCATIONAL STRATEGIES</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Workshop Series Format:</b> weekly, interactive workshops</li> <li><b>Hands-On Learning:</b> cooking demonstrations, meal planning exercises, and grocery shopping guidance</li> <li><b>Handouts &amp; Digital Materials:</b> USDA/ MyPlate resources, budget-friendly meal plans, and nutrition factsheets offered by Create Better Health, a SNAP-Ed curriculum</li> <li><b>Incentives/ Giveaways:</b> food vouchers to local markets, local grocery store gift cards, reusable grocery bags, measuring cups, and culturally relevant recipe books</li> </ul> <p><b>THEORY</b></p> <p>The Create Better Health curriculum is an evidence-based program that aligns with LCHC's goal of increasing nutrition knowledge and food security among families. By integrating USDA/ MyPlate guidelines with hands-on learning experiences - such as cooking demonstrations, meal planning exercises, and grocery shopping guidance - the curriculum ensures participants develop practical skills for healthier living.</p> <p>Through structured, research-backed materials, the program fosters sustainable behavior change, equipping families with the confidence to make nutritious dietary choices while utilizing community-based food resources.</p>	
		<p><a href="http://Visit.lchcnetwork.org">Visit lchcnetwork.org to learn more.</a></p>	
<p>Nutrition Education Forum   Spring 2025</p>			



# Martha's Table | Healthy Foods Program

## Healthy Foods Program

### ORGANIZATION: MARTHA'S TABLE

**PRESENTER**  
Katherine Donnelly, Community Health Nutritionist and Mallory Mpare-Quarles, Deputy Chief - Health & Wellness Programs

**PRIORITY AUDIENCE**  
Residents of DC Wards 7 & 8

**NEEDS ASSESSMENT**  
We carry out community feedback surveying under the guidance of Martha's Table Learning, Evaluation, and Research Department. In addition, we seek to gather qualitative and quantitative data through focus groups, in-depth interviews, and surveys to further understand our community's needs and wants.

**OBJECTIVES**

- Goal 1:** Address food insecurity for families and children in Wards 7 & 8 through healthy food access
  - Objective 1: Provide residents access to healthy food through distribution and no-cost groceries at 50+ monthly school sites, 5 weekly summer markets, and 2 daily market sites
  - Objective 2: Distribute to 50+ sites in Wards 7 & 8, a minimum of 625,400 pounds of nutritious food based on USDA dietary guidelines
- Goal 2:** Increase healthy cooking and eating behaviors, intentions, and self-efficacy among program participants

**EVALUATION**  
We collect data on a quarterly basis. We collect guest participation and basic demographics.  
At the Joyful Food Markets, we assess program participants':

- level of food security,
- nutrition knowledge, and
- engagement in healthy eating behaviors.

**EDUCATIONAL STRATEGIES**  
Our markets operate on two distribution models. Food is distributed at schools either as pre-bagged groceries with supporting print materials OR as a client choices, farmers market-style set up where guests choose their items.  
For the 2025-26 school year, we plan to mandate that all of our market sites have to be choice-based models.

- Healthy Recipes:** Recipes offered are quick, easy, and convenient, taking 30 minutes or less to prepare, with fewer than 10 steps, and highlighting healthy ingredients available at the market
- Food Education Activities:** Hands-on activities based on SNAP-Ed curriculum cover topics like meal prep, food storage, and the health benefits of specific ingredients.
- Print Materials:** Recipe cards and nutrition education worksheets are available for children and families to take home

**THEORY**  
**Social - Ecological Model for Change: 4 levels of influence that impact health behaviors**

- Individual Level -** Nutrition messages & cooking activities to address knowledge, attitudes, and beliefs about healthy eating
- Family Level -** Joyful Food Market health messaging & activities encourage caregivers and adults to try healthy recipes at home with their children
- Community Level -** Working with schools & community-based partners to improve the food environment by offering healthy food access points at convenient locations and times
- Systems Level -** Collaborating with local & federal food access partners to improve the referral pathway structures to connect more families to nutrition benefits

**PROGRAM CHANGES & IMPROVEMENTS**  
Over the last 10 years, the Healthy Foods Programs have expanded in locations and participation. Furthermore, the programs navigated the COVID-19 years by using bagging models but have returned to providing choice-based market models. Moving forward, we seek to strengthen our nutrition security programming.  
The Healthy Foods Market Programs are always in need of volunteers to help support our food access markets.

[Visit marthastable.org/to-learn-more.](https://www.marthastable.org/to-learn-more)

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# Mary's Center | Eat Well, Live Better! Senior Nutrition Program

## Eat Well, Live Better! Senior Nutrition Program

### ORGANIZATION: MARY'S CENTER

**PRESENTER**  
Caroline Casey, Senior Nutrition Program Manager

**PRIORITY AUDIENCE**  
Low-income older adults in Washington, DC (Aged 60+)

**NEEDS ASSESSMENT**  
The program began during COVID-19 and at that time older adults were experiencing difficulty accessing fresh food due to the cost and the recommendations to stay at home. As time passed, and the program grew, we learned about additional participant needs from the participants themselves.

**OBJECTIVES**

- Increase participants' access to fresh fruits and vegetables
- Increase fruit and vegetable intake among participants
- Increase access to nutrition education
- Provide referrals/ connection to support services and community resources

**EVALUATION**

- Satisfaction surveys with participants to assess feelings about the program as well as self-reported intake of fruits and vegetables and food access.
- Nutritionist monitors nutrition related health markers and diet with participants that work with her.

**EDUCATIONAL STRATEGIES**

- In each food box, we include a packet of flyers on health topics, community resources, and recipes.
- A weekly nutrition newsletter that focuses on one nutrition topic with a recipe.
- A weekly community resource newsletter.
- Two zoom classes each week. Wednesday focuses on a health or nutrition topic. Friday classes offer a cooking demonstration to supplement the Wednesday topic.

**THEORY**  
**Mary's Center Social Change Model:** The intersection of comprehensive medical care, dual generation education, and social services.  
We knew that offering produce was a great support, but not enough. We wanted to ensure that participants could appreciate the food, know the importance of eating healthy and how that impacts them personally, and mostly to know how to cook the food that they were being given!

**PROGRAM CHANGES & IMPROVEMENTS**

- The program originally had funding for 500 participants. Two years in, we received funding to serve 750 seniors.
- When we received additional funding, we were able to hire a family support worker whose job is to connect participants with outside resources.
- When the program started, we included beans, canned tuna, and a grain in the food box. Participant feedback let us know that they were receiving similar items from the food bank and did not need ours.
- We secured an additional grant to offer new supports to participants. We sent every participant olive oil and food choppers to assist them in cooking healthy meals at home.




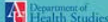
The Senior Nutrition Program is a food delivery that aims to look beyond the food and focus on the whole person. Every 3 weeks, participants receive a box of fresh fruits and vegetables. We offer nutrition education via flyers, emails, Zoom calls and one on one nutrition counseling to those participants that are interested. We do health and wellness screeners with each participant to identify needs and connect them to additional community resources. We send information to all participants about relevant community resources.  
We believe that the program thrives because we have an open line of communication with our participants. They can call, text, or email us when they need something, making us a reliable source of nutrition and resource information. We have done extra projects like sending homemade holiday cards and calling participants on their birthdays. These small things have helped us to build rapport with participants and engage them in services.

[Visit maryscenter.org/to-learn-more.](https://www.maryscenter.org/to-learn-more)

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# University of the District of Columbia | SNAP-Ed Program

		<b>UDC SNAP-Ed Program</b>	
<b>ORGANIZATION: UNIVERSITY OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA</b>			
<b>PRESENTER</b> Miranda Desmarais, Senior Program Coordinator			
<b>PRIORITY AUDIENCE</b> Children ages 2 - 5 and their parents, caregivers, and adults aged 60+			
<b>NEEDS ASSESSMENT</b> UDC SNAP-Ed utilizes frequent partnership meetings and participant focus groups to determine the ongoing needs of participants. When new programs are established, needs assessments are implemented, utilizing resources from SNAP-Ed Connection.			
<b>OBJECTIVES</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase healthful eating and physical activity among SNAP-eligible children and adults in D.C.</li> <li>• Strengthen community partnerships with service providers in SNAP-Ed eligible settings</li> <li>• Increase consumption of vegetables, fruits, whole grains, low/no-fat dairy, lean protein, and water</li> <li>• Decrease the frequency of screen time and sedentary behaviors</li> </ul> UDC SNAP-Ed has three project areas: (1) Healthy Schools and Childcare, (2) Healthy Seniors, and (3) Healthy Corner Stores.		<b>EVALUATION</b> <p><b>Schools and Childcare:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Of all food samples provided in preschool settings, 87% of participating preschoolers took at least one bite, and 63.7% ate the whole 2 oz. serving</li> <li>• Of all food samples provided in elementary school settings, 89.6% of participating students took at least one bite, and 75.2% ate the whole 2 oz. serving</li> <li>• Through our PSE with schools and childcare, partnering teachers reported teaching 656 SNAP-Ed lessons, equating to 563 hours of nutrition-related topics taught by classroom teachers.</li> </ul> <p><b>Older Adults:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In a pre-/post-survey, 67% of older adults participating in series-based education saw a positive change in behavior related to the frequency in which they used MyPlate to make food choices by the end of the series.</li> <li>• In the same survey, 70% of older adults participants saw a positive change in behavior related to the frequency in which they exercised by the end of the series.</li> </ul> <p><b>Healthy Corner Stores:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 17/20 stores participating in UDC's Healthy Retailer program indicated having made a change in their store based on the healthy retailer trainings. Changes included moving or changing the produce display, increasing food orders, increasing food variety, and adding whole grain products to the store.</li> </ul>	
 <p><b>EDUCATIONAL STRATEGIES</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Train-the-trainer: SNAP-Educators identify champions in the community to help continue to educate and motivate SNAP-eligible audiences in their respective fields.                         <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ This model is used to train and provide curriculum for preschool and public-school teachers, as well as for healthy corner store owners and staff.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Evidence-based curricula is used to improve knowledge, increase motivations for, and drive action toward healthy behavior change.</li> <li>• Indirect approaches utilizing a variety of newsletters, factsheets, nutrition education reinforcement materials, and social media posts to share nutrition resources with District residents.</li> </ul> <p><b>THEORY</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• UDC SNAP-Ed implements series-based education utilizing evidence-based curriculum to bring about behavior change related to budget-friendly healthy eating, shopping and cooking practices. By using evidence-based resources, program participants receive accurate and up-to-date information with proven results. UDC SNAP-Educators utilize a variety of techniques to meet participants at their current nutrition knowledge and motivations to help bring about small changes for sustainable life practices.</li> <li>• For early childhood education programs, UDC SNAP-Ed focuses on creating positive food experiences and exposure to new foods. Utilizing our Taste Test Protocol, UDC SNAP-Educators use the five senses to help all children interact with a food even if they are not ready to try it.</li> </ul>		<p><b>PROGRAM CHANGES &amp; IMPROVEMENTS</b></p> <p>Within the past five years, UDC SNAP-Ed has begun to focus more on policy, systems, and environmental change through our healthy corners priority and our healthy schools and childcare priority. In this approach, we have added more partnerships and programs related to reaching a broader audience and making changes on a greater scale.</p>	
		<a href="http://visit.udc.edu/causes/land-grant/snap-ed/">Visit <a href="http://visit.udc.edu/causes/land-grant/snap-ed/">visit.udc.edu/causes/land-grant/snap-ed/</a> to learn more.</a>	
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# YMCA of Metropolitan Washington | SNAP-Ed - ATOAH and SCWH

		<b>SNAP-Ed – A Taste of African Heritage (ATOAH) and Simple Cooking with Heart (SCWH)</b>	
<b>ORGANIZATION: YMCA OF METROPOLITAN WASHINGTON</b>			
<b>PRESENTER</b> Tessa Mork, Association Director of Community Health			
<b>PRIORITY AUDIENCE</b> SNAP-eligible District adults & families			
<b>NEEDS ASSESSMENT</b> The priority audience was surveyed to determine their specific needs. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We track "pre" and "post" conversations that are guided by the instructor during the first lesson and the final lesson. This is a semi-structured conversation where we solicit feedback from our participants. These questions were provided by DC Health.</li> <li>• We ask a few questions in our post surveys to gauge participants experience in the class, then we have a form for open feedback as well. Staff created these questions.</li> </ul>			
<b>OBJECTIVES</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase consumption of fruits, vegetables, whole grains, beans, and spices and reduce salt</li> <li>• Improve cooking skills and nutritional literacy</li> <li>• Reduce diet-related health disparities in the African-American community using heritage as a motivator for health</li> <li>• Reframe nutrition and culinary education in a way that is culturally relevant to participants and honors African-American's culture, traditions, and contributions</li> </ul>		<p><b>EVALUATION</b></p> <p>Evaluation of the program included measuring <b>participation, self-efficacy, self-reported consumption of produce, and behavior change.</b></p> <p>Participants were surveyed upon program completion. In FFY2024, the surveys indicated the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 100% of participants feel more comfortable in the kitchen (n=29)</li> <li>• 100% of participants feel more confident in their ability to cook a healthy meal for themselves or their family (n=29)</li> <li>• 96% of participants agree that they are more willing to try new fruits and vegetables (n=28)</li> <li>• 90% of participants feel more confident in their nutrition knowledge (n=29)</li> <li>• 93% of participants agree that they have increased their consumption of fruits and vegetables (n=28)</li> <li>• 82% of participants agree that they have increased their consumption of whole grains (n=27)</li> </ul>	
 <p><b>EDUCATIONAL STRATEGIES</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A term-limited series (i.e., 4-week, 8-week) comprised of 1.5 to 2-hour virtual classes</li> <li>• Access to pre-recorded digital materials</li> <li>• A nutritional, culinary, and cultural lesson each week</li> <li>• 2-4 dish demos by an instructor</li> <li>• A workbook with recipes</li> </ul> <p><b>THEORY</b></p> <p>ATOAH &amp; SCWH are grounded within Social Cognitive Theory, and they are skills-based curricula designed to influence culinary- and nutrition-related behavior.</p>		<p><b>PROGRAM CHANGES &amp; IMPROVEMENTS</b></p> <p>We have continually adapted our program based on participant feedback.</p>	
		<a href="http://visit.ymcadc.org/culinary-and-nutrition-education/">Visit <a href="http://visit.ymcadc.org/culinary-and-nutrition-education/">visit.ymcadc.org/culinary-and-nutrition-education/</a> to learn more.</a>	
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# NUTRITION EDUCATION FORUM

**MARCH 25TH, 2025 | 10:00 AM - 1:30 PM**

American University, Butler Boardroom

**10:00 AM Welcome & Opening Remarks**

- Dr. Stacey Snelling, American University
- Bria Hamlet, American University

**10:15 AM Panel: Creating Community & Expanding Access**

- Jo-Ann Jolly, D.C. Health
- Miranda Desmarais, University of the District of Columbia
- Beth Bacon, FRESHFARM
- Dr. Edrin Williams, Leadership Council for Healthy Communities

**11:00 AM Gallery Walk & Networking**

**Learn from organizations doing impactful community nutrition education:**

American University	Leadership Council for Healthy Communities
Capital Area Food Bank	Martha's Table
CentroNía	Mary's Center
FRESHFARM	University of the District of Columbia
Friends of the National Arboretum	YMCA of Metropolitan Washington

**11:45 AM Lunch & Group Discussion**

**1:00 PM Session: Training the Modern Nutrition Educator from Theory to Practice**

- Dr. Dara Ford, American University
- Dr. Evan Reister, American University

**1:30 PM Program Adjourns**



COLLEGE of ARTS & SCIENCES

**HEALTHY SCHOOLS,  
HEALTHY COMMUNITIES**

Cultivating an equitable food system in DC.

To complete the post-event survey,  
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