

Vocational Horticulture and Transition With Exceptional Students: The Drew Horticulture Program

2023 National Children and Youth Garden Symposium
July 12-15, Knoxville, TN
Closing Keynote Address



Mr. Michael Craig
Teacher of the Cognitively Impaired
Horticulture Program Instructor
Charles R. Drew Transition Center
Detroit Public Schools Community District
9600 Wyoming Detroit, MI 48234
michael.craig@detroitk12.org



Introduction to Charles Drew Transition Center

- ▶ Post-Secondary vocational center for Moderate and Severely Cognitively Impaired, Visually Impaired, Hearing Impaired, Physically Impaired, Otherwise Health Impaired, and students with Autism. Students earn a certificate of completion
- ▶ Roughly 35% of Drew students have severe and/or multiple disabilities and are wheelchair-bound
- ▶ Serves students aged 18-26 in a center-based, vocational work skills environment. Goal is to provide students with skill training that transfers into the adult working world, promote independent living, employability skills
- ▶ Building features simulated learning environments through a working bank, laundry facilities, clothing store, convenience store, fitness center, post office, a foods program, woodworking and horticulture programs
- ▶ Roughly 130 of our 395 students are placed daily within community businesses in Metro Detroit, including: Veterans Hospital, Sinai-Grace Hospital, Henry Ford Hospital, Salvation Army, TJ Maxx, Chili's Restaurants, Burlington Coat Factory, and Mackenzie Elementary/Middle School.

Drew Horticulture Program

The Gardens at Drew

- ▶ The Drew Horticulture Program and *The Gardens at Drew* originated in fall of 2012 as a program designed to impart vocational, social and functional independence skills in a horticulture setting while providing access to fresh, local produce to parents and community
- ▶ The Drew Horticulture Program and The Gardens at Drew, with a Hoophouse containing 18 growing beds alongside hydroponic and Dutch Bucket Systems, nine indoor hydroponic growing tables, indoor Aeroponic and Aquaponic Systems, 60 outdoor raised bed garden areas Drew Orchards (22 trees of Apple, Peach, Pear variety) provide the setting for Drew students to assist in the growing of fruits, vegetables and flowers for the Farm 2 School program, food pantry donations, Eastern Market ventures, and for our restaurant and retail clients, gaining valuable skills in horticulture and farming.
- ▶ ***The comprehensive, internationally-recognized Drew Horticulture Program is the largest school market garden program in the country!***
- ▶ <https://nsba.org/ASBJ/2021/conference-daily/Detroit-public-schools>



Farm to School/Table/Community



Healthy Hunger Free Kids Act, 2010

Sponsored by Senator Debbie Stabenaw

Authorizes funding for federal school meal and child nutrition programs and increases access to healthy food for low income children.

Act allows child nutrition funds to be utilized to establish and maintain school based gardens.









Adaptability/Diversity in Food Growth



Adaptability is the Key to Success



Differentiated Instruction in Food Production





Level of Independent Tasking

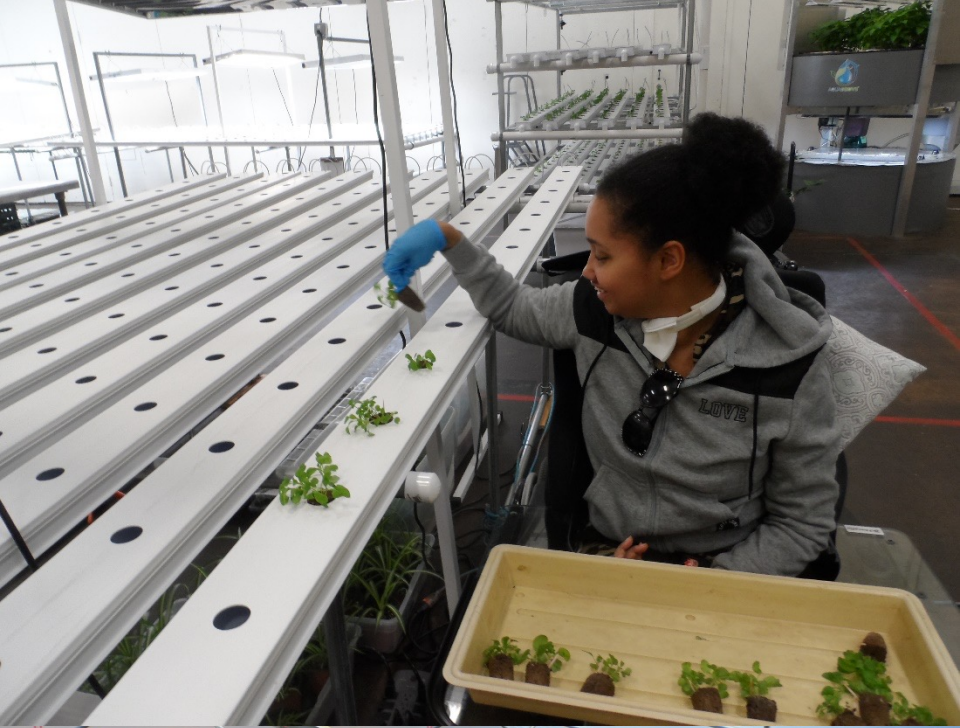














100
EXTRA LARGE
EXTRA GRAB
AMBITEX
POWDER FREE
VINYL GLOVES
VXLD01
Powder Free
Vinyl Gloves





Corporate Partnerships/Supply Chain



Corporate Partnerships, Collaboration





CHARTREUSE KITCHEN & COCKTAILS

<https://chartreusekc.com>



freyadetroit.com





VERTICAL
HARVEST

Drew Horticulture's New Venture??

- ▶ <https://www.verticalharvestfarms.com/locations/Jackson/>
- ▶ <https://www.verticalharvestfarms.com/locations/Detroit-Michigan/>

Questions?

Michael Craig
Teacher of the Cognitively Impaired
Horticulture Program Instructor
Charles Drew Transition Center
Detroit Public Schools Community District
michael.craig@detroitk12.org

Certified Advanced Master Gardener, MSU Extension

2023 Great American Gardener Jane L. Taylor Teaching Award
2021 NSBA Grand Prize Magna Award Winner
2021 SetSeg/MASB Educator Excellence Award Winner
2019 Michigan Department of Education Innovative Educator Corps
2015-16 Michigan Lottery/WXYZ TV Excellence in Education Educator of the Year
2015-16 Michigan Department of Education's Michigan Teacher of the Year Finalist

