



University Heights Store Partners with Providence- Based Nonprofit to Establish Youth-Led Vegetable Garden



Justin Roias | University Heights Store Providence, RI

A Whole Body Team Member, Justin has been with Whole Foods Market for eight years. “As a community activist, I see the issue of food insecurity as a **social justice issue**. I am well aware that a lack of adequate nutrition may lead to a range of mental and physical health issues such as obesity and depression, among others.” Although Smith Hill CDC specializes in providing affordable housing to low-income residents, Justin points out that that its commitment to **providing access** to healthy food shows that they are much more than a community development corporation. He **proudly supports** the nonprofit by being an active board member, taking an active role in the community garden initiatives and securing a Community First Grant on Smith Hill CDC’s behalf.

Smith Hill Community Development Corporation smithhillcdc.org

Since 1992, the Smith Hill Community Development Corporation (Smith Hill CDC) has been dedicated to **improving the quality of life** in Smith Hill and its neighboring communities. With its first Community First Grant, the group was able to revitalize Camden Avenue Community Garden, now an active inter-generational community hub. Reflective of Smith Hill’s diverse population, community members are encouraged to **grow foods native to their homeland**. This has helped **foster conversations** around food, culture and identity. Now, Smith Hill CDC is renovating a three-floor home for young adults and transitioning aged youth. This 2019 grant will help establish a youth-led vegetable garden and **beautify a green space** on the property. Smith Hill CDC plans on offering **educational cooking demonstrations** in the house’s kitchen too.



Whole Foods Market Team Members can nominate a local nonprofit increasing access to fresh, healthy food or nutrition education for a \$5,000 grant.

WholeCitiesFoundation.org