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Faith Food Fridays unveils new Learning Community Garden for Vallejo

Posted by [Gretchen Zimmermann](#) Jan 27, 2023

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The garden is a joint project of [Faith Food Fridays](#) and [Sustainable Solano](#) to provide a place for community members to learn how to grow healthy foods.



Faith Food Fridays grew out of a mission to end hunger. It has been operating for 12 years providing free food, encouragement and resource referrals, with no questions asked and no ID required. They are open for food pickups three days a week and serve 6-700 households per week.

The new garden at the organization's distribution center has several raised beds, some of which will be available for rent and some that will be available for community planting.

Faith Food Fridays founder and director Benjamin Buggs opened Thursday's ceremony by saying the need for community food distribution is increasing.

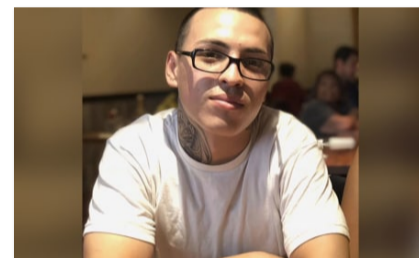
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"Hard to believe, in today's world hunger exists and it's growing right now," Buggs said. "Our numbers are going up and up and up."

Faith Food Fridays administrative director Mary Ann Buggs pointed out several empty raised garden beds in the heavily mulched lot that are available for organizations to rent. "They'll be like sponsored planters," she said.

Sustainable Solano's Solano Gardens Program Coordinator Jazzmin "Jazz" Ballou spoke next. "This land that we occupy is Patwin land and we're here to acknowledge that and see what we can do to enrich it through growing our own food and authentically showing up for ourselves for our communities, for the earth and for one another," Ballou said.

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City of Vallejo Beautification Commissioner Roxanne Reyes has been working on the garden for the last few months. She said her goal is to help people of limited means create a garden of their own at home using recycled materials.



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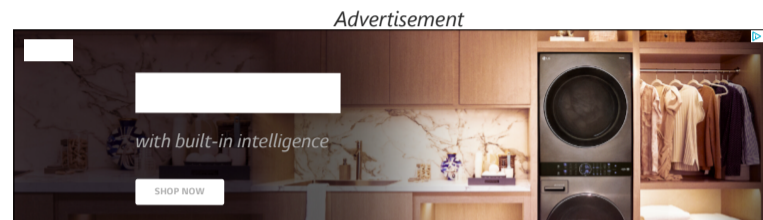


American Indian Movement Foothills of Central California director Sister Who Walks With Bears, colonized name Marge Grow Eppard, emphasized the need for healthy food in communities of color.

"It's time for us to take back the land and nurture it and make it more sustainable and healthy for our next seven generations because we're seeing obesity and diabetes in infants now," Eppard said.

Suscol Inter-tribal Council executive director Charlie Toledo said she has been an organic gardener all her life. "We used to call it fresh vegetables," Toledo said. "Now you call it sustainable, organic, locally sourced, all those fancy words, but it still comes down to good food that keeps you healthy."

Faith Food Fridays is located at 826 Solano Ave, Vallejo. They are open for donation drop-offs seven days a week. More information is available at faithfoodfridays.com



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Gretchen Zimmermann

Gretchen Zimmermann started volunteering with Vallejo Open Studios in 2010, launched the Vallejo Arts and Entertainment website in 2014 and creates mixed media sculpture at Mare Island Art Studios.

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