

**Profile of
Campus Garden Program
University of Wisconsin–Whitewater
2024 Regents Diversity Award Program Recipient**

Highlights from nomination materials:

- Led by UW-Whitewater Sustainability Coordinator Wes Enterline, the Campus Garden program has brought together students, staff, faculty, and community members to support and serve individuals and families of the UW-Whitewater campus and surrounding community for more than a decade.
- The Campus Garden program has been providing positive and impactful programming to a wide array of students throughout the campus and local schools to provide those students with life-long gardening skills. This programming promotes healthy eating habits along with the personal ability to ensure food security.
- The program's primary mission is to provide fresh produce to local food pantries, which serve a diverse local population. By addressing food insecurity, the program contributes to the well-being of underrepresented populations, first-generation students, and economically disadvantaged individuals on campus and in the local community. The ongoing donations, totaling over 25,000 pounds of produce to date, and more than 2,500 pounds in 2023 alone, demonstrate the sustainability of the program's impact.
- Incorporated into the programming are opportunities for UW-Whitewater students to develop as leaders with internships and volunteer opportunities. The students gain real-world experience with planning, developing, and implementing gardening, educational, volunteer, and donation programs. Students learn to engage with community members and business leaders as they build skills they can use in their careers. Their efforts in the garden and the community have resulted in hundreds of volunteer hours and thousands of pounds of fresh produce distributed through food pantries every year.
- The program was integrated into a service-learning class devoted to emulating the mission of Growing Power, an organization started by Will Allen in Milwaukee to address the urban food desert found in his neighborhood. His book, *The Good Food Revolution*, became the basis for the class to understand how learning sustainability principles like composting food waste, propagating and saving seeds, and organic gardening techniques can have a direct impact. UW-Whitewater participants predominantly consisted of underrepresented or first-generation students.

In the words of the program:

- “Volunteers have an opportunity to learn through hands-on experience that yields a better understanding for and greater confidence in gardening skills that build their own food security....Maintaining close relationships with our food pantry partners helps us ensure the offerings reflect clients’ demand.”

In the words of colleagues:

- “Food insecurity is a reality that often impacts the health and well-being of underrepresented populations and economically disadvantaged individuals. The Campus Garden program is changing and improving those lives daily by giving children and adults the knowledge and tools to combat this reality.”
—Brenda L Jones, Vice Chancellor for Finance and Administrative Affairs, UW-Whitewater
- “In my experience, the hallmarks of the Campus Garden Program in the nine years I have worked with it have been its flexibility, its dependability, and its impact. Its hundreds of student workers and volunteers since 2013 have learned firsthand how to ask the people they are collaborating with whether their work is effective and to adjust their work according to the responses they receive.”—Kristine Zaballos, Assistant Director of University Marketing and Communications, UW-Whitewater; Co-founder of Whitewater City Market and Warhawk Pantry, UW-Whitewater.