



# MAKING THE INVISIBLE, VISIBLE

**LEAF 2021 ANNUAL REPORT**



Farming alongside a creek is such a privilege and a challenge. Every day I am grateful that we get to work this fertile soil while extraordinary birds keep us company. On the other hand, we contend with floods and all that means. On certain mornings when the creek water is warmer than the air, the valley becomes filled with an otherworldly fog, concealing the

farm. On these magical days, the sun slowly burns off the fog and reveals the landscape in a new light.

As an organization we are going through a similar revelation. In founding LEAF, we worked to build a program that saw youth in a new light, revealed their talents, and fed our community. Our start-up phase included that head down drive to make the dream a reality, with no limit to the work or our passion to do it – and often the generosity of our community showing up at just the right time. As we have grown, we have had to ask ourselves hard questions about how to build sustainable systems that honor the youth, the land, the staff, and our community. This process has felt like lifting the fog, showing us more about what it takes to caretake the land we stand on, what all is involved in cultivating youth leaders, and what it really means to build a food system that works for everyone.

This annual report’s theme is making the invisible visible. I am thrilled to partner with youth on the farm, but also as partners in strategic planning and governance. I am excited by the strides we have made in supporting our staff team through adding benefits (not to mention air conditioning and a flushing toilet)! LEAF is also taking a deep dive in looking who our local food system is working for and who it doesn’t. Caretaking each other and our community is necessary, long-term work and I am profoundly grateful for your support in doing it.



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Josh Staley, *Program Coordinator*

Amber Bahn, *Farm Manager*

Alison Reggio, *Events and Operations Coordinator*

Dave Cleck, *Accountant*

Poppy, *Farm Dog / Moral Support*



# MEET THE CREW

Front Row:

*Kate (Kitchen Lead), Grayson (Program Team), Heather, Ricki (Community Engagement Director), Lena (Research and Design Lead), Emma (Farm Lead), Heidi (Executive Director), Sami (youngest crew member), Amber (Farm Manager), Christina (Outreach Lead)*

Second Row:

*Shane (Curriculum & Grants Director), Vierria, Marco, Gabe, Scott (Program Team), Sarah*

Third Row:

*Josh (Program Coordinator), Jonah (Program Team), Isaac (Program Team), Oscar, Jared (Farm Team), Ella, Meredith, Parmila, Liv, Spencer, Prasamsa*

Fourth Row:

*Walker (Farm Team), Max, Jeremiah (Farm Team)*

Not Pictured: *Selah*



**The LEAF Project cultivates youth leaders from diverse backgrounds through meaningful work in the food system.**

# FOR THE FIRST TIME, WELCOME LEAF ALUMS TO THE BOARD!



## **When did you join LEAF and what attracted you to the program?**

I joined LEAF in 2014 because I wanted to try something new and work with my hands!

## **What are you most proud of from your time working with LEAF?**

I'm proudest of the impact I was able to make as a crew leader. Being able to create a fun and supportive team dynamic, while also mentoring others and helping them grow was very rewarding.

## **What do you do now and how does LEAF still impact your life?**

I work at Ernst & Young as a business consultant and in the summer, I work at the Head House Farmers Market for one of LEAF's partner farms, Three Springs! LEAF has impacted my life in so many ways. It has made me a more conscious consumer and expanded my appreciation for the local food system. Additionally, it has equipped me with the leadership and team management skills that I still use at my job each day.

## **Why did you choose to join the board? What do you hope to do with that role?**

I had the opportunity to work with LEAF in varying roles throughout my time in the program and thought joining the board would be a great way to see the organization from another lens. I hope to use my perspective as a LEAF alumni to make meaningful board decisions and find ways to increase alumni engagement.



## **When did you join LEAF and what attracted you to the program?**

I joined LEAF in the summer of 2014. The potential to grow as a leader and work on my culinary skills are what initially attracted me to the program.

## **What are you most proud of from your time working with LEAF?**

I am most proud of all the connections that I made at the time and all the growth and learning that I was able to accomplish alongside peers of various backgrounds!

## **What do you do now and how does LEAF still impact your life?**

I am currently a teacher and LEAF still impacts my life in many ways! From trying to use variations of the vision guide-lines in my classroom, to being mindful of the food I eat and where it comes from, the impact that LEAF had on me still plays a huge role in my life.

## **Why did you choose to join the board? What do you hope to do with that role?**

My belief and appreciation of the program and its mission was the driving force behind me joining the board. I hope to be able to provide unique insights as a board member and contribute towards LEAF's continuous growth!

# IMPACT REPORT

10,676

**TOTAL YOUTH HOURS**  
engaged in meaningful  
work. That's a lot of  
learning, planting,  
and growing!



92%

of youth said they have  
**GROWN IN  
COMMUNICATING**  
with people from  
**DIFFERENT BACKGROUNDS**



25

**YOUTH EMPLOYED**  
from Cumberland,  
Dauphin, and Perry  
Counties

85%

of youth said they now  
**FEEL MORE COMFORTABLE  
RECEIVING FEEDBACK**  
from supervisors.

77%

**YOUTH ADVANCED**  
to our school year pro-  
gram with higher levels  
of responsibility

8

**GARDEN BOXES INSTALLED**  
including seedlings and  
educational materials,  
empowering families to grow  
their own food



101

**HOUSEHOLDS**  
received weekly  
produce  
That's a \$47,750  
value!

1,533

Servings of  
**FRESH PRODUCE AND  
PREPARED MEALS  
DISTRIBUTED**  
through hunger relief  
organizations



"I know that my hard work is for a reason and in the end, I am helping others, the community, and families that need food. I'm really helping and sparking change in the world. It really makes me feel good about myself."

- Alay'za, Youth Crew Member

# DIVERSIFIED VEGETABLE PRE-APPRENTICESHIP

## What is the Diversified Vegetable Apprenticeship (DVP)

LEAF is thrilled to be one of the founding partners of the Diversified Vegetable Pre-Apprenticeship (DVP), developed by Pasa Sustainable Agriculture and registered with the PA Department of Labor and Industry. This rigorous pre-apprenticeship includes hands-on, on-the-job training as well as workshop instruction in the core skills required to manage a diversified vegetable farm, such as crop planning, soil fertility management, marketing, and business planning. LEAF youth are eligible to enroll in the DVP after their first summer with LEAF and gain lifelong skills in entrepreneurship as well as sustainable land management. We are particularly thrilled that the DVP creates a much needed pathway for aspiring and beginning farmers from all backgrounds, regardless of prior experience.



Emma den Hoed is one of the first ever graduates from the DVP and shares her insights on the program.

## Can you start by sharing an impactful memory you have of the DVP?

One of my last workshops was doing what we call a farm walk, which is walking around the farm and looking for issues that need to be addressed. You write down those issues but you also write down the solutions. As I was writing those down I realized that I knew a lot more than I thought and that I can talk with the staff in a more empowered way.



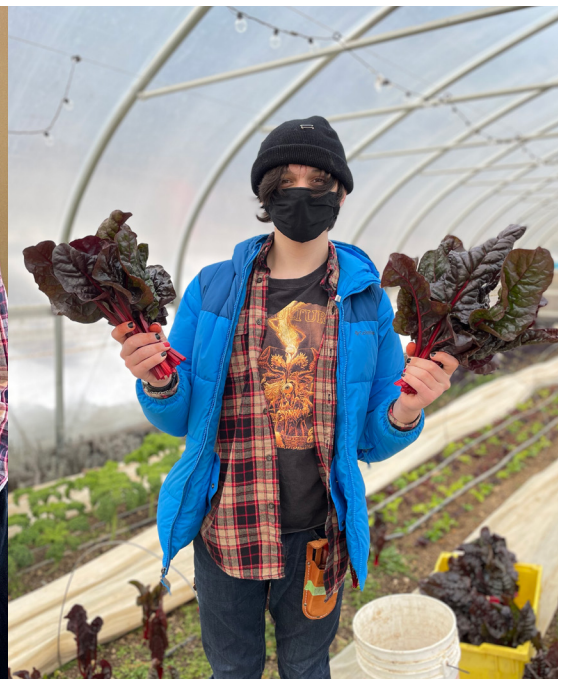
## What do you want people to know about the DVP?

I want people to know that it can be used for more than just farming. Yes, you learn about farming but you also learn about budgeting, business, and leadership so it can be used in multiple different facets. Anyone can do it, it is not restricted. You do not have to have access to farmland to participate and you can use a garden

or a local farm to practice. The DVP has helped shape my dream of bringing sustainable agriculture to urban environments, helped me learn about growing my own food, and how to rely on myself and my community for food and nutrition.

**If people learn one thing about your experience with the DVP, what would it be?**

That it can empower young people who participate and can change the way you view the world. Personally, it has changed the way I think about buying food and the ways food is produced, and the way that I buy food. I have so much more appreciation for the food at farmer's markets because I know how they were produced. The DVP has a huge impact. With the DVP, different ethnicities would be more connected to parts of their culture, we would not be reliant on processed food made by corporations, and we would be more connected to the way food is made. We would all be more powerful if we understood how it all worked and a lot of stereotypes would be broken about who can do what.



# PARENT'S PERSPECTIVE

## **Tell us a little bit about your family and how your son, Max, got involved with LEAF.**

Our introduction to LEAF was a brochure that came home in Max's backpack from school one day. When we looked at the website and asked around about the program, all that came back were glowing, glowing reviews! We also thought it was a good way to have a first job, to learn about the food system, and it was safe (outside) during the pandemic.

## **What changes have you seen in Max in his time at LEAF?**

LEAF may be one of the few employers that actually loves teenagers! This program helps them thrive! It has been so fun to watch all the kids come out of their shell: to understand that responsibility means others depend on your work, to think meaningfully about what it means to lead and connect with others, and to get a better understanding of the local and national food system. Max is more naturally drawn to engineering, and he has loved being given the chance to invent modifications for tools or to think about an irrigation system. All the physical exercise has put him on a path of fitness and healthy eating.

## **How has Max working with LEAF impacted him and/or your family, if at all?**

Our family has started eating local and seasonal food as much as we can. Max's job there has reminded us how important it is to support local farmers, respect and support our food supply, and reduce waste.

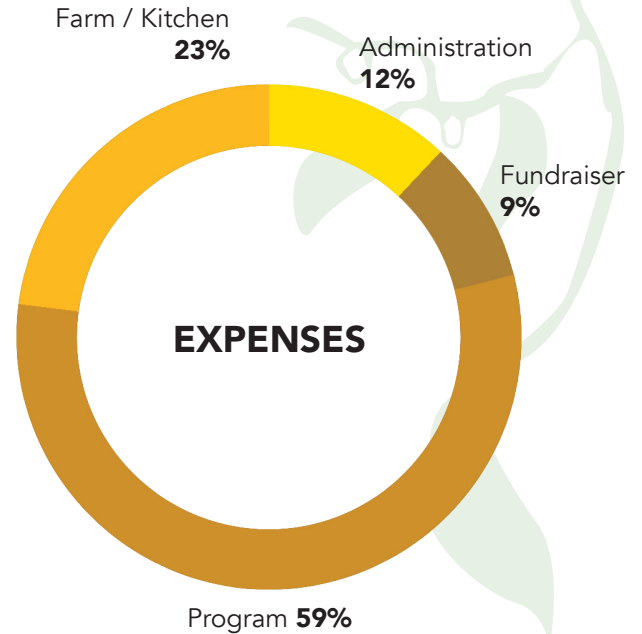
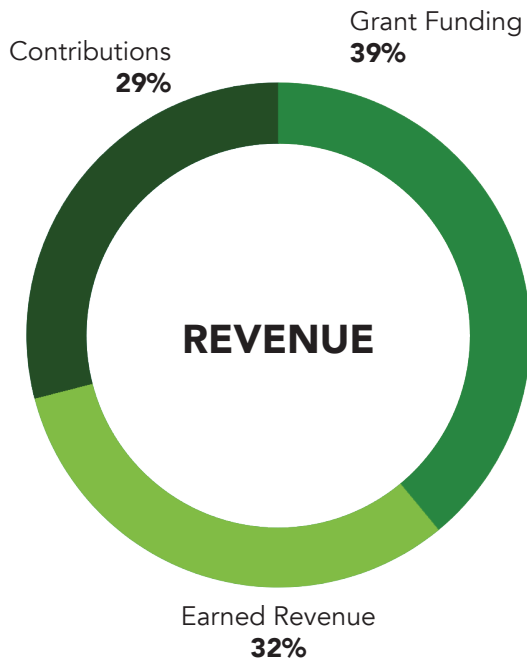
## **What would you want other parents to know about the LEAF Project?**

Even though LEAF is centered around farming, this is not just a farming job. The leadership training is the kind of socio-emotional education that is missing in most jobs. The kids start with the psychical work they can handle and are promoted as they reach milestones, but also as they demonstrate the ability to bring out the best in those around them. They feel pride in themselves and in helping others reach milestones. This program instills a wonderful balance of empathy and striving. They also get a living understanding of our food supply, which broadens the way they think about systems (food or others) in general. This is a wonderful program!





# ANNUAL FINANCIALS



## REVENUE

Farm Revenue	\$67,143.14
Kitchen Revenue	\$11,219.31
Program Revenue	\$9,586.57
Events	\$49,229.37
Business & Organizations Contributions	\$51,972.34
In-Kind Donations	\$4,444.59
Individual Donations	\$68,043.64
Grant Funding	\$167,255.34
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$428,894.30</b>

## EXPENSES

Youth Compensations	\$73,977.78
Staff Compensation	\$209,330.53
Benefits & Payroll	\$18,990.36
Contracted Labor	\$4,380.00
Equipment & Supplies	\$54,262.47
Insurance	\$5,943.00
Transportation	\$7,983.26
Facilities & Rentals	\$15,827.70
Depreciation	\$15,183.91
Professional Development & Training	\$4,709.37
Administrative Costs	\$11,422.89
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$422,011.27</b>

# THANK YOU

## Organizational Sponsors

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## Grant Funding

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Mary Ann Wright



# GET INVOLVED WITH LEAF!

## FARM TO TABLE DINNERS

Farm to Table Dinners are a unique opportunity for LEAF youth to interact with members of the community at a farm-to-table meal prepared and served by incredible executive chefs and the youth crew. Farm to Table Dinners take place on the LEAF farm and allows youth to share their experience and teach others about the impact of LEAF. If you are interested in creating this experience for you and a group of friends, please reach out to [info@leafprojectpa.org](mailto:info@leafprojectpa.org).

## ON FARM EVENTS

- LEAF Open Farm - July 16th, 2022 - Free and open to the public!
- Savor - September 17th, 2022 LEAF - Ticketed strolling supper!
- Fall Work Party - October 16th, 2022 Free and open to the public!


## VIST US AT MARKETS


Support local growers and artisans by visiting your local farmers market!

We will be at:

- *Farmer's on the Square* At the Carlisle Town Square  
from 3-7 pm every Wednesday May - November
- *Broad Street Market* from 9 am - 1 pm , Saturdays June - October

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