

Gather New Haven - Neighbors and Nature Thriving Together

Mission:

*To promote health, equity, and justice for people and the environment
by **cultivating connections** with each other and our local lands and waters, and
by **inspiring us to care** for ourselves, our community, and the natural world.*

Program Impacts: Fresh Food & Nature-based Wellness and Land & Water Stewardship

Community Gardens – Gather’s staff supports a network of volunteer District Coordinators who, in turn, support nearly fifty volunteer Garden Coordinators at a community-run gardens across the City of New Haven.

Farms – Gather’s Farm Manager staff operates multiple farm sites producing food to be delivered to our wellness program participants, community members in need of fresh, organic produce, and our farm stand.

Farm-based Wellness – Launched in 2012, the Farm-Based Wellness Program is an early intervention program for low-income people aimed at reducing the development and severity of diabetes and other diet-related chronic diseases.

Growing Entrepreneurs/Eco-Lab – Since 2016 we’ve been helping teens to prepare for both post-secondary education, careers, and businesses, and to become effective stewards of their own health and of our environment. The New Haven Eco-Entrepreneurship Creative Lab is building a community of young adult (ages 18-25) innovators that will deepen youth understanding of how thoughtful entrepreneurship can solve environmental issues.

Preserves/Natural Areas – Free and open access to experience trails and forested waterfront areas along with nature and wellness programs and events.

Schooner Camp – We bring kids ages 6-16 to the coastline and waters of the Long Island Sound for summer camp.

Organization background A 501(c)(3), Gather New Haven (Gather) launched in 2020 following the merger of Schooner Inc., the New Haven Land Trust, and New Haven Farms. Funded through public and private grants, donations, and program revenue, we support 2 urban micro-farms, 45 community gardens, and 3 nature preserves. Our dynamic, innovative programs address the intersecting crises of diabetes and obesity, food insecurity and poverty, and environmental justice and conservation. We focus on community health and wellbeing, youth leadership and development, environmental education and stewardship, and urban agriculture.

Gather runs several youth-oriented programs. Sailing and shoreline exploration programs engage campers in science-based learning, with leadership and youth development opportunities for teens. High school students in our Growing Entrepreneurs program develop professional skills, entrepreneurship, understanding of environmental issues, and gardening and carpentry skills in preparation for both post-secondary education, careers, and businesses, and becoming effective stewards of their own health and of our environment.

Gather supports community gardens across New Haven. A team of eight volunteer District Coordinators – leads the 45 current gardens. Most are Master Gardeners trained by the University of CT Cooperative Extension Master Gardening program. Six to 20 individuals and families manage their own beds at each site or join together to tend shared plantings. Several gardens have become social centers where neighbors gather to socialize or for events (e.g., musical performances, dinners, movie nights). Many, but sadly not all, of the gardens remained active throughout the pandemic, offering rare opportunities to safely connect with neighbors. We are revitalizing all of our gardens post-pandemic.

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