Winter Harvest Coming to Warrior Garden
Low tunnels to supply greens for Earth Day!

On February 18, SEED Wayne staff and volunteers built low tunnels on top of two existing beds at Warrior Demonstration Garden. Called the Warrior Winter Garden, these 4’ x 18’ beds are planted with a mix of salad greens and other cold tolerant crops for harvesting in time to celebrate Earth Week, 2011. Program Leader Charles Lisee led the build.

A few days prior to the build, Robert Taormina, Community Arts woodshop manager, devised a form to shape PVC pipes into arches needed to create the low tunnel. All arches to form the tunnel frame were molded at the woodshop.

When we convened on site that Friday, temps were in in the upper 40s for which we were grateful. However, the day also brought high winds and we fought mightily to keep the plastic from blowing away. The following weekend, the tunnels survived being buried under more than eight inches of snow! What a trial by fire, er, snow and wind!

Low tunnels help extend the growing season beyond that allowed by Michigan’s seasonal calendar. One week after the build, temperatures under the covers were a balmy fifty to sixty degrees and Lisee noticed earthworms happily wriggling just under the soil surface.

Planting in the beds began the week of February 28 and continued the following week. Varieties grown include a couple of types of lettuce and lettuce mixes, mustard greens, spinach, and radish. These will be harvested, if all goes according to plan, Earth Week (April 18-22), and used in tastings on campus.

For more information about gardening on campus, google “SEED Wayne” and click on buttons related to the Warrior Demonstration Garden or St. Andrew’s allotment Garden. If you wish to receive quarterly updates on SEED Wayne activities, click on the appropriate button at the site.

Wayne by offering salad tastings from the Warrior Garden during Earth Week tablings at Towers Cafeteria.

This year, we expect to work closely with AVI, WSU’s food service contractor, at the garden. AVI chefs will help prepare the salads for Earth Week. Over the course of the growing season, we will also plant vegetables and herbs whose harvests will be processed by AVI chefs and set aside for use at SEED Wayne’s annual harvest dinner. Thus, the dinner, usually held in late October or early November, will feature diverse products derived from Warrior Garden over the course of the entire season, instead of featuring just those harvested in late fall.

Above: SEED Wayne Program Leader Charles Lisee and volunteer Chelsey Wilt struggle against high winds to lay the plastic on the low tunnel frame. Bottom, right: That weekend, the tunnels survived a snow storm that dumped eight inches of snow.

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March 15, 2011

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$SEED Wayne gets MI Green Leader honorable mention! Read more on page 3

HOLD THE DATE!
Powering Up the Local Food System Summit
May 19-20
Read more on page 4
Planning in Full Swing for Campus Gardens

In addition to the Winter Garden at Warrior (see page 1), we are gearing up for the summer garden season at St. Andrew’s, and the Warrior, and the rooftop gardens on campus. This includes updating application materials, assembling lists of seeds and transplants that will be available to us through the Garden Resource Program and those we have to purchase, creating a garden schedule, and getting the word out! We expect that recruiting student groups to participate at St. Andrew’s Garden will be greatly facilitated by Earth Week activities featuring Winter Garden harvests!

We are also retooling our composting plans for the year so that the containers behind the Warrior Garden are used more efficiently and effectively. Last fall, we filled them up with dry leaves and hay, which have now shrunk to about a third of their original volume. In March and April, SEED Wayne and AVI staff will transport kitchen wastes, including egg shells, coffee grounds, and fruit and vegetable discards, to each of the containers, until they are full. By regularly rotating the containers, we mix the various components, each high in nitrogen or carbon levels, so that compost is ready to use in fall and repeating this year’s cycle again next year.

This year, too, in a happy linkage between our gardening activities and Detroit FRESH—healthy corner store project—activities, a participating store has expressed an interest in developing a garden on a nearby vacant lot. We have connected the store to the Garden Resource Program to get the land acquisition process going, and will help the neighborhood group the store assembles, as needed, with setting the garden up. We look forward to the day when the store offers vegetables grown next door, to neighborhood residents free of charge or at a heavily discounted price.

If your group is interested in participating in SEED Wayne’s campus gardens, please contact Charles Lisee at cllisee@wayne.edu or click on the button for St. Andrew’s Garden or Warrior Garden at our website: www.clas.wayne.edu/seedwayne.

Cities and Food Class

UP 5999, Cities and Food, offered every winter by SEED Wayne director Kami Pothukuchi, is now in full swing, with 14 enrolled students and two auditing guests. Enrolled students are from diverse majors, including urban planning, nutrition and food science, and political science, and also include two students from University of Michigan’s Semester in Detroit program.

To date, the class has featured seminars by four community-based experts on a variety of food system topics. Guests include Sarah Fleming of the Detroit Economic Growth Corporation, Sharon Quincy of City of Detroit Department of Health and Wellness Promotion (standing in for deputy director Bill Ridella, who couldn’t make it due to illness), DeWayne Wells of the Gleaners Community Food Bank, Betti Wiggins of Detroit Public Schools, and Dan Carmody of Eastern Market Corporation. In dynamic presentations, they provided a rich picture of particular sectors of the community’s food system, how Detroiters link to the sectors, and their strengths and challenges.

We learned about issues related to retail grocery in Detroit and how to improve the quality and quantity of full-service grocery stores in underserved neighborhoods; federal nutrition programs such as WIC (Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children) and Summer Food Service Program; food insecurity and emergency food assistance; school food service, including free and reduced price breakfasts and lunches; and public markets as community food hubs.

More guest seminars are coming: Susan Schmidt of AVI Foodsystems, Jennifer Fike of Food System Economic Partnership, Patrick Crouch of Earthworks Urban Farm, Ashley (Continued on page 3)
Wayne State Wednesday Farmers Market: June 8-October 26

We’re busily gearing up for the third full season of the Wayne State University Farmers Market. Because details are still coming in, please check the farmers market web page after googling “SEED Wayne.” Here, however, are the highlights:

Only the Wednesday farmers market will be offered this year. As usual, it will be at 5201 Cass Ave (in front of Prentis Hall), from June 8 through October 26, 11 AM to 4 PM. We will explore the feasibility of a weekly summer market for future years at the WSU School of Medicine.

The market will accept cash, the Michigan Bridge Card, the WSU One Card, and Senior Project FRESH vouchers. Due to changes that the state’s Department of Community Health is making to the WIC Project FRESH program, it is unclear if we’ll be able to accept WIC Project FRESH vouchers this year.

SEED Wayne gets honorable mention as 2011 Michigan Green Leader

SEED Wayne and director Kami Pothukuchi earned honorable mention in the 2011 Michigan Green Leader awards program of the Detroit Free Press. We were selected by independent judges from among 265 nominations, of which 16 won the award and 14 others earned honorable mention. The program recognizes efforts to make Michigan cleaner, more economically diverse, and sustainable. Award categories include businesses, nonprofits, individuals, and outstanding efforts in the public sector.

The winners and other honorees will be recognized Thursday, April 21, 8 a.m. at DTE headquarters downtown. Governor Rick Snyder will keynote the event. Tickets to the awards breakfast can be purchased for $40 each at www.michigangreenleaders.com. Award winners and honorees will also be listed in a special section to appear in the Sunday Free Press on April 17. Be sure to save and share a clipping of the section!

The honorable mention is a significant recognition of SEED Wayne’s initiatives to build sustainable food systems on campus and in the community! As SEED Wayne partners and friends, dear readers, this recognition is yours too!

Cities and Food, Cont’d from page 2

Atkinson of Greening of Detroit, and Malik Yakini of the Detroit Black Community Food Security Network.

Students undertake team projects that are designed by course partners. This year, they include assessing a sample of full-service grocery stores, interviewing members of and business-owners serving the Arab-American community for their perceptions of and opinions on Eastern Market, and developing an annotated bibliography of analysis of race in the food system.

Evaluations in 2010 included the following comments: “I enjoyed the course very much. I would like to see this course become a required course for all planning/urban studies students.” “Overall, I thought this course was excellent.” “I love having the guest speakers along with readings, discussions, and movies.” “Interactive and engaging on so many levels.”

For a seminar schedule, click on the ‘University Lectures and Seminars’ tab at: http://www.clas.wayne.edu/seedwayne.
A newsletter of SEED Wayne, Sustainable Food Systems Education & Engagement in Detroit & Wayne State University

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SEED Wayne is dedicated to collaboratively building sustainable food systems on campus and in Detroit neighborhoods through activities in teaching, research, engagement, and campus operations.

SEED Wayne works in partnership with community-based organizations to increase access to healthy food, enhance food security, urban agriculture, farm-to-institution, and food system planning and policy development.

SEED Wayne embraces core university functions in teaching, research, engagement and operations.

Student leadership is central to SEED Wayne’s success.

SEED Wayne projects include campus gardens, farmers markets, Detroit FRESH: the Healthy Corner Stores Project, farm-to-cafeteria, and cafeteria composting.

SEED Wayne is housed in the Department of Urban Studies and Planning.

Detroit Food Policy Council’s Inaugural Summit Planned for May

The Detroit Food Policy Council (DFPC) will host its inaugural food summit, "Powering Up The Local Food System," May 19 and 20, at Eastern Market. Registration opens April 1.

The summit has several goals: to publicly launch the Detroit Food Policy Council since it first convened in November 2009; raise public awareness of the city’s food system; engage community members, including youth, in dialogues about current actions and policies and needed future ones; and inspire community members and leaders to become involved in building a just and sustainable food system in Detroit.

On May 20, DFPC chair Malik Yakini will make keynote remarks. A report on Detroit’s food system will be released at the summit. Led by SEED Wayne director (and DFPC vice-chair) Kami Pothukuchi, the report analyzes strengths and weaknesses in Detroit’s food system and its links to community health and welfare, economic vitality, and other community goals. It also features many community-based initiatives to repair gaps in the conventional food system and build a better alternative. The summit will also engage participants in four DFPC work groups, each related to healthy food access, urban agriculture, community food justice, and schools and institutions.

The summit will be preceded by four public forums to engage Detroiters in conversations about the food system and encourage their participation in the summit. These forums occur April 19 at Gleaners Community Food Bank, April 20 at Nsoroma Institute, April 24 at a location to be named, and April 26 at Christ the King Catholic Church.

The Detroit Food Policy Council was established in 2009 by unanimous approval of the Detroit City Council. The DFPC consists of twenty-one members, including 12 members with expertise in various sectors of the food system, six "at-large" representatives, and three governmental representatives, each named by the mayor's office, City Council, and the Department of Health and Wellness Promotion. The DFPC is committed to nurturing the development and maintenance of a sustainable, localized food system and food-secure city of Detroit in which all of its residents are hunger-free, healthy and benefit economically from the food system. For more information, contact Cheryl Simon at 313-833-0396 or detroitfoodpolicycouncil@gmail.com or browse www.detroitfoodpolicycouncil.net.