



**This is a grassroots movement.
Move grass. Grow food.**

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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VICTORY GARDEN INITIATIVE KICKS OFF 2015 FOOD LEADER CERTIFICATE PROGRAM

Milwaukee, WI —Victory Garden Initiative commenced their third annual Food Leader Certificate Program on October 11th and 12th with a kick-off retreat at JCC Rainbow Day Camp. Thirteen emerging community leaders worked with VGI founder Gretchen Mead, Jessy Servi, and 3 Food Leader graduate mentors to learn about our current food landscape and envision an alternate sustainable, accessible, and holistic food system.

VGI's 10-month-long Food Leader Certificate Program gives 13 emerging food leaders from the Milwaukee area the opportunity to learn about our dominant food system, practice leadership and community organizing skills, and grow their own food.

"I spent two years in a learning community graduate program. I earned a Master's in Education-Professional Development (ME-PD) in 2003. In one weekend, FLCP achieved greater success than I experienced in two years pursuing this degree," says Valerie Vervoort, 2015 Food Leader participant. "If you have a heart for connecting with food and community I would say, do not miss this retreat and leadership program."

The year consists of a series of classes and retreats that culminate in each participant leading a food project in their own community. Projects in the past have ranged from helping to start a workplace compost system, to organizing the planting of a neighborhood orchard, to starting a microgreens business that supports fighting hunger internationally. Food Leaders who complete the full program graduate with a formal certificate.

"As food leaders, we envision a sustainable, abundant, accessible, and holistic food system that empowers diverse communities of all ages."

-2015 Food Leaders

About Victory Garden Initiative:

Victory Garden Initiative promotes a sustainable and socially just food system by building communities of people who grow their own food, reintegrating human and food ecology. The scope of Victory Garden's educational programs and urban agricultural projects encompass a complete cycle: from soil, to seed, to plate, and composting back to soil — in back yards, front yards, rooftops and on patios.

