

10 Years of the Nisqually Community Garden

By Chantay Anderson, Janell Blacketer, Carlin Briner and Grace Ann Byrd

The Nisqually Community Garden celebrated 10 years this summer and we wrapped up another successful season with the annual Harvest Party on October 15th, 2019. The event was well attended and featured a seasonal dinner, cider pressing with the apples from the Garden, and an abundant giveaway of food and medicine. We would like to give a big thanks to our volunteers, the Youth Center staff, and our garden staff, especially our extraordinary seasonal crew as they are finishing up their work for the year.

As we continually gather community feedback, our programming has grown and evolved over the years. In the past couple years we have increased services to Nisqually Elders. This year we completed our second season of the Elders Home Delivery program – this year 24 Nisqually Elders received a box of assorted produce from the Garden each week through the peak season. Also, in collaboration with the Nisqually AmeriCorps crew, we built raised garden beds in the yards of 5 Elders and provided seeds and starts for their own gardens. We will continue to build raised garden beds for 5 Elders each spring.

In addition to increasing services to Elders, we have also expanded our nutrition education and medicinal plant program over the past several years. We regularly collaborate with the Zumba and Yoga classes that the Tribe offers to employees at noon throughout the week. We bring recipes and produce from the garden (Smoothies, Energy/Protein Bites, Salads, etc.) and in doing this it shows that taking care of yourself inside and out is available to you around Nisqually. We also deliver medicines and hold medicine-making workshops in partnership with many different Tribal programs. We take roots and honey to the Elders, stress and anxiety plants and tinctures to Substance Abuse and most departments have made a Nourishing Healing Salve or Trauma Balm with us. It's exciting to work with all of you and we plan on making more classes with different plant remedies all year. A special Thanks to those who have gone into the wild with us to harvest Cottonwood Buds, Devil's Club, Salal and Hawthorn, or anyone who has donated wild plants. The Garden Crew gathers wild plants all year and usually has tea available.

Though the main season of produce distribution has ended, we will continue to harvest and deliver produce for Elders only to the Nisqually Elders Center every Monday at noon through December. We will also be doing more workshops through the winter season so look for more information about upcoming classes!

Photos from the 2019 Season:





Photos from the Harvest Party:



















Maylani Ann Trapp, age 3

Photo courtesy of Lou Ann Squally