

Location: Carmel NY

A Sensory and Vegetable Garden for Veterans

Issue: Putnam County Veterans in residence at the Senator Vinnie Leibel Veteran's Residence expressed an interest in gardening and growing some of their own food. While the existing vegetable garden was nearby, footing was unstable, beds were on the ground, and there was no easy access to water.



Extension Response: CCE educators saw an opportunity to make a difference in the lives of the residents. With a generous donation from the Dyson Foundation, we sought guidance from the Putnam County Veterans Services Agency and Mental Health Association. CCE Educators and Master Gardener Volunteers worked with the Vets in residence to brainstorm what they would like to have in their garden. Volunteer Sue O'Brien took the lead not only as liaison with the Residents, but in sourcing and designing the raised beds.

Leveraging the initial donation, CCE worked with area contractors and businesses to double the funding with materials and in-kind donations. Through community networking, the project attracted additional community assistance: the Knights of Columbus and Fraternal Order of Police, already delivering food and clothes to the residents, generously donated their time on a rainy day to build the garden beds, and are adding two new picnic tables.

Impacts:

- Safe and level footing, eliminating trip hazards.
- Raised beds with seating edge for easy access.
- Increased visitation to the Veterans in residence.
- Ongoing social, cooking, gardening activities.
- Increased % of residents involved in outdoor activities

Contributors:

The Dyson Foundation ♦ Unilock of NY ♦ PLM Land Management ♦ Palumbo Block Co ♦ Earth Alterations ♦ Carmel WinWater ♦ Petersen's' Patterson Greenhouses ♦ Sabellico's Greenhouse and Florist ♦

Partners:

Putnam County Veterans Services, Mental Health Association, and Highways Department ♦ Kent Highway Department ♦ Second Chance Foods



Contact Name: Jennifer Lerner, Senior Resource Educator

1 Geneva Rd, Brewster NY 10509 p.845-278-6738 w.putnam.cce.cornell.edu e.putnam@cornell.edu
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