



# Growing for Good

SOUTHSIDE COMMUNITY LAND TRUST

Fresh news from Southside Community Land Trust

SUMMER 2022

## Moving to 404 Broad Street, and to a more just food system



"SCLT's Healthy Food Hub is a win-win for all of us," said Sen. Jack Reed at the 404 Broad Street ribbon cutting.

During SCLT's first 40 years, we built gardens and farms and helped people grow an abundance of delicious food. Many have eaten better, saved on their grocery bills and earned money from selling their produce. And, yet, deep-rooted systemic racism continues to keep affordable, fresh produce out of reach of most low-income Black and Brown residents of Providence, Pawtucket and Central Falls. Our current goal is building greater community control of local food assets in a way that is both equitable and sustainable.

Support for this work was made abundantly clear on June 24, when 140 people—community leaders, SCLT supporters, staff and board members—gathered for the ribbon cutting at the 404 Broad Street Healthy Food Hub. The completely renovated, 12,000 sq. ft. building now houses SCLT's headquarters, Farm-to-Market Center, Youth Enterprise Center, community kitchen and, soon, three healthy food retail spaces.

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## Meet food system intern, Appoline Alphonsine

SCLT's summer jobs program for youth has been in full swing this July and August, training 30 high school students at our farms in Providence and Pawtucket in food production, nutrition and cooking, sustainable land use and environmental justice. Assisting at each location are food system interns, motivated program graduates who bring their lived experiences and perspectives to our work.

In Providence, Eli Servrien is spending his second summer between college semesters as an intern, after working at SCLT throughout high school. The other intern is Appoline Alphonsine, who joined the youth staff three years ago.

This summer, she spends three days per week with students at the Somerset Hayward Youth Farm and two at City Farm, mostly preparing crops for the farmers markets held on Thursdays and Saturdays. She likes both assignments, but says she likes being around the other staff and volunteers at City Farm.

"I'd rather be learning than teaching," she says. Either way, she loves "how good it feels to be around plants growing in the ground. I grew up near farms and watching farmers," she recalls of the decade

she spent in a camp for Congolese refugees in Burundi from the time she was 2 years old. She remembers how delicious the pineapples, passion fruit and guava they grew were.

Along with her parents and three brothers, she came to Providence when she was 12. Even though she didn't speak English, she said she didn't find the adjustment too challenging. That kind of resilience helped her become one of the best students at Hope High School, where she graduated as the salutatorian this past spring. She plans to study at CCRI.



Appoline became one of the first youth representatives to the Board of Directors last year.

In early 2021, Appoline and another youth staff, Leonte Tucent, underwent training and became SCLT's first youth representatives to the Board of Directors. If she isn't too busy with classes and homework

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# A shared vision, hard work and compassion helped build 404 Broad Street

Dear friend,

In case you missed the news coverage about SCLT lately, we've completed phase 1 of our ambitious \$5.8 million capital campaign and finally moved into 404 Broad Street. At our ribbon cutting, speakers from funding organizations and community leaders celebrated SCLT's greatly expanded capacity. With our Farm-to-Market Center and three healthy food retail businesses on the ground floor, the 404 Broad Street Healthy Food Hub will anchor local efforts to bring equity to our food system.

Noting SCLT's long history in the neighborhood—and the many committed people who've been involved with the organization—Sen. Jack Reed kindly observed: "If everyone around the country emulated the same sensitivity and compassion toward their communities, we would all be better off."

With much work ahead, we're grateful to have so many generous partners in our efforts. We hope you'll join us in the next step of our journey by contributing to the matching campaign described below. **And, watch for details of our "40-ish Anniversary" event at Peace & Plenty Community Garden on September 18!**

With gratitude,



**Margaret DeVos**  
Executive Director



**Rochelle Bates Lee**  
President, Board of Directors

## Let's keep our GROW! momentum going

### Generous supporter offers SCLT a \$500,000 matching gift

The speeches were spoken, the ceremonial ribbon was cut, and the moving boxes have been emptied at 404 Broad Street. Now comes maximizing all 12,000 sq. ft. of the building to fulfill our vision to make lasting, equitable changes to our local food system.

Helping us get there is an extremely generous, anonymous donor who has pledged a \$500,000 matching grant.

Funding will support:

**New infrastructure users** • In addition to 404 Broad Street, SCLT acquired the 20-acre Good Earth Farm in the past year. We want to support the infrastructure needs of the farmers there and elsewhere in our network – as well as the food business tenants at 404 Broad Street—so they can all be successful.

**GROW 2.0** • As we finish the build-out at 404 Broad Street, we need to fortify SCLT's community outreach

and race equity work, administrative, financial and operational improvements, and begin a new strategic plan. We're looking to our community, staff and consultants to help us plan for the future.

**Endowment** • The capital campaign raised \$200,000 toward our \$500,000 goal for SCLT's endowment. With additional funding we'll be able to maintain our capital investments.

**Please use the enclosed envelope or donate online to help us unlock this \$500,000 matching grant.**

**Thank you for your ongoing interest and support for SCLT!**

## Meet Appoline *Cont'd from front page*

this fall, she wants to continue as both a food system intern and a board member, helping to chart the future of SCLT's work.

"Appoline has contributed to SCLT's work in countless ways," says Rochelle Lee, SCLT's board chair, "including providing skills, leadership and invaluable capacity to our grassroots initiatives."

What she's liked most about that experience so far

is being present when so many big decisions had to be made about 404 Broad Street. It's too soon to know how her experience at SCLT will influence her career, she says, although she wants "to have my own garden I can trust to have good food."

For now, she's interested in fashion design, with farming as a fallback position. "But, I'll just let it play out. I'm only 19."



Appoline with Providence summer youth staff Anais and Gianna.

# Good grub is coming to 404 Broad Street

Union Studio is working with the three retail tenants to build out their spaces in the next six months



Luna Walker in her current market in Pawtucket.

## West African Super Store

The largest of the tenants (facing Broad Street), the West African Super Store, will sell traditional products from Africa, primarily Liberia, plus fresh produce grown by farmers in SCLT's network. Luna Walker and her family have operated their current market, Lu's Mini Mart, in Pawtucket for the past decade. They also operate the African restaurant Afrique D'Lounge on Dean Street in Providence.

Luna knows her community and what customers in the South Side and nearby neighborhoods, including many immigrants and refugees, are seeking. The move to 404 Broad Street will bring a change to her business model, which has specialized in shelf-safe products. She will now have direct access to fresh produce grown by farmers (including those from West and Central Africa) just a few feet away, in SCLT's Farm-to-Market Center.



Union Studio's Ben Willis, left, looking over early plans with Darell Douglas for his future restaurant, with his girlfriend Giovanna looking on.

## D's Spot

Facing Linden Street will be D's Spot, owned by Darell Douglas. The restaurant will be a spinoff of his fast-casual, 'chicken and waffles' eatery in Pawtucket, which he started in 2014 and will continue to operate. The new place will have a healthier focus and offer dine-in service, plus online ordering and takeout service.

Darell grew up on the South Side and faced many of the struggles that are endemic to the neighborhood. He says he turned to entrepreneurship out of necessity, and has made community building an integral part of his business model by opening up his space and hosting events for artists and others. D's Spot's tagline, "Food is love, love is hope," reflects this vision.

Darell plans to continue hosting events and building connections in his "new" neighborhood. You can follow Darell on Instagram @ds\_spot to learn more about his business and upcoming plans at 404 Broad Street.



At 404 Broad Street, Bean looks forward to expanding her business in a neighborhood she knows well.

## Black Beans PVD

Black Beans PVD is a scratch kitchen run by Adena "Bean" Marcelino. Born and raised in Providence's West End, Bean is committed to serving her community through food and advocacy. While she began her career in mental health, Bean now guides people to wellness through homestyle meals at pop-up locations around Providence. She also offers items for pick-up through online ordering. Currently Black Beans PVD operates out of a shared commercial kitchen. The move to 404 Broad will allow her to expand her business to a full-time operation with counter seating and a couple of tables.

"The goal is to create a space that feels like you're eating at my home, so the counter will be table height, hopefully creating a space that is ADA compliant as well as high chair friendly," says Bean. You can learn more about her business here: [www.blackbeanspvd.com](http://www.blackbeanspvd.com)

## Moving to 404 Broad Street *Cont'd from front page*

"This unique, community-based project will increase our farming resources, enhance our educational programs and better assist our local retailers who are, essentially, the front line to accessing locally grown, healthy and fresh foods," said Rochelle Lee, SCLT's board chair, at the event.

Margaret DeVos, SCLT's executive director, added: "We knew it would be a heavy lift, financially and organizationally, because no

other similar facility had found its way to our neighborhood. But the need to increase our capacity was clear." She went on to thank the GROW! Capital Campaign Committee, led by Mike Isenberg and Mary Worrell, and members Rebecca Preston, Pat Fuller, Austin Smith, David Liddle, Louis Raymond and Davide Dukcevic.

Since its founding in 1981, SCLT's footprint has grown steadily. Properties now comprise 22 community gardens in Providence,

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## Moving to 404 Broad Street *Cont'd from page 3*

Pawtucket and Central Falls and more than 70 acres of farmland in Cranston, Hope and Tiverton, RI. As a leader in urban agriculture, SCLT has advocated for people being able to grow food, raise chickens and bees in residential neighborhoods and abandoned city properties, resulting in many more Rhode Islanders now enjoying healthy, chemical-free produce. Local farmers in our network now sell their harvests through markets, businesses and program partners serving low-income communities.

In response to the pandemic, in 2020 staff began distributing a greater share of farmers' produce through emergency food programs. That same year, SCLT also launched its produce prescription program, VeggieRx, by partnering with clinicians to "treat" food-insecure patients with free, healthy food.

The Farm-to-Market Center at 404 Broad Street will greatly increase efficiencies for distributing produce through this program and to local food businesses, including the three that will be operating at 404 Broad Street. *(See Good Grub on p. 3)*

As we position ourselves for the next phase of SCLT's operations, we will finally have the chance to celebrate the land trust's first 40 years, an event we postponed because of Covid. On Sunday, September 18, we're inviting SCLT members, friends and their families to join us for what we're calling our "40-ish Celebration." We look forward to celebrating all we have achieved together!

**Stay tuned for more information in our e-newsletters, social media and at [southsideclt.org](http://southsideclt.org)**

Southside Community Land Trust's mission is to provide access to land, education and other resources so people in Rhode Island can grow food in environmentally sustainable ways and create community food systems where locally produced, affordable and healthy food is available to all.

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# Thank you

to our corporate, foundation, and government funders

*(contributions above \$2,000 to SCLT's programs & operations, from July 2021-June 2022)*

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**Southside Community Land Trust**  
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*Donors to SCLT's GROW! Capital Campaign are listed in our Annual Report.*