



Name

Address

Dear <Name>,

Thank you for making a positive impact in the lives of local teens like Yeimi Ayala!

For many generations, Yeimi’s family in El Salvador has grown corn to make homemade tortillas. Thanks to your support of REC, Yeimi is able to follow in their footsteps while also charting her own path—and impacting her local community right here in Worcester.

Yeimi has participated in YouthGROW (Youth Growing Organics in Worcester), REC’s urban agricultural employment program for low-income teens, for the past two years. In that time she has learned to grow fruits and vegetables on REC’s two organic urban farms in Worcester’s Main South and Bell Hill neighborhoods.



While Yeimi prefers growing beets and jalapeños to corn, she is thrilled to form a connection to her distant family through farming. In YouthGROW, Yeimi has also found a welcoming and supportive environment that has helped her blossom alongside the food she grows:

“I’ve received the most help from the REC. I call it my happy place,” says Yeimi. “Sometimes other people don’t believe in me...sometimes I don’t believe in me; but I learned to believe in myself because of the support I have from this organization.”

Please make a gift to REC to help more teens like Yeimi discover their potentials.

YouthGROWers like Yeimi play a significant role in fostering food justice in Worcester. The healthy food they grow is sold affordably in Worcester’s most food-insecure neighborhoods through the REC’s Mobile Farmers Market. YouthGROW participants become advocates for healthy food, farming, and the environment.

As Yeimi says,

“Vegetables are so expensive and it seems like there’s never enough healthy food for the families who need it. I’m happy to help people learn about programs that can help them. My mom doesn’t speak English, so it’s been great to give her help to get access to healthy food as well.”

Join Yeimi in taking an active role in transforming your community by making your gift to REC today.





Thanks to your support, Yeimi’s story is not unique. Each year, YouthGROW employs 35-40 low-income, underserved teenagers who help their community while learning essential job and leadership skills. For many youth, REC also offers a lifeline by providing a safe space and adult role models. As Yeimi notes, **“I’ve seen how YouthGROW has positively impacted kids who would have been in danger—they get into YouthGROW and they’re so much better!”**



Help foster the next generation of community, environmental, and food justice leaders by making your end-of-year gift to the REC today.

Over the past year, your generous support has helped the REC:

- Employ **38 low-income Worcester teens** like Yeimi through YouthGROW—providing life and jobs skills training, adult mentorship, and an opportunity for a brighter future.
- Enable **12,000 low-income Worcester families** to buy and eat healthy, affordable, local food from more than **30 family farms and urban farms** through REC Community Farmers Markets.
- Support a growing network of more than **60 community and school gardens and urban farms** throughout Worcester by providing training, tools, seedlings, compost, and technical support to more than **600 gardeners and urban farmers, and 2,000 public school students.**
- Host a variety of community events, including our 29th Annual REC Earth Day Cleanups, which saw more than **1,200 volunteers remove 100 tons of trash from 70 sites** throughout Worcester.

We are so thankful for all of your support in 2018. **Now, as we head into the holiday season and begin to look forward to 2019, can you help with a gift again?**

We are so thankful for your previous gift of \$XX, which has already gone a long way to help build healthy, sustainable, and just communities in Worcester and beyond. **Please consider renewing with a gift of XX.00—during our busiest time of year—to make a difference when it’s needed the most for families and teens like Yeimi.**

With gratitude,

Steve Fisher
Executive Director

Eve Gilmore
Board President

P.S. As you gather with loved ones to celebrate the holidays, we hope you’ll remember the REC and the people we serve, like Yeimi Ayala, by making a final gift for 2018. Together, now and in the New Year, we can continue to build healthy, sustainable, and just communities in Worcester and beyond. Thank you!