

Fairgate Farm enjoys another bountiful season!

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Great weather, healthy crops, enthusiastic volunteers and lots to do – all in all, it was a great season at Fairgate Farm! The Farm, now in its seventh season, has become a treasured source of fresh fruit and vegetables, and serves as a “living classroom” for area students, residents and volunteers from across the region who enjoy getting their hands dirty, helping others and sharing in the fresh bounty.

“Fairgate Farm started as a way to reclaim portions of a blighted neighborhood, with the goals of raising nutritional awareness, and being a source for offering fresh fruit and vegetables to people in our neighborhood,” said Farm Manager Pete Novajosky, who joined COC earlier this year. “Now it’s become a ‘go to’ location for a variety of classes and

Fairgate Farm has demonstrated growth on many fronts, Pete explains. He and his volunteers have planted lots of new crops (100+



varieties of fruits, vegetables, flowers and herbs) and have added more volunteers, with people of all ages contributing generously and taking just-picked produce home to their families.

The farm has completed its busy program of events in the 2017 season. The annual Strawberry Festival launched the season in June, followed by bi-weekly composting classes throughout the summer months along with a Farm-to-Table dinner, harvesting, herbs and hydroponic classes.

Fairgate Farm has an ongoing composting program that is in progress year round. Everyone is encouraged to bring compostable materials such as fruit and vegetable scraps, coffee grounds,

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A Harvest Festival participant proudly displays her colorfully painted pumpkin and flower balloon created by one of several clowns at the festival.

Board Meetings for 2017:

- **December 13, 2017**

The meeting will begin at 6:00 p.m. at Post House, 40 Clinton Avenue in the first-floor meeting room.



programs, festivals and a place where anyone can come and learn about farming, healthy eating, composting, conservation and much more.”



Employee Profile: Alexis Luzietti



Alexis Luzietti began working at COC as a temporary employee in the Finance Department in July of 2017, and she was offered the permanent position of Junior Accountant in August 2017. Alexis enjoys being part of the Finance team. "Everyone does their part and contributes toward a common goal," she says. "We work together, help and support each other. I have learned something new every day

from my team, and I look forward to what the future has in store for me at COC."

Alexis is happy working at COC, and one of her favorite pursuits is helping the community in need. "By building public housing, we give families and individuals a place to live in a safe and cohesive neighborhood," Alexis says. She also admires the community events COC participates in and hosts, such as the COC Fairgate Farm employee volunteer day. "It was great to see employees come together to volunteer for the best interest of the community," she recalls.

Alexis graduated from High Point University in North Carolina in May 2017 with a Bachelor's degree in Accounting. She was a member of multiple clubs and held two jobs on campus. One of her favorite activities was volunteering with her sorority. Year round they would host events and volunteer to raise money for breast cancer education and awareness.

Alexis plans to continue volunteering at charitable events in the future.

Alexis's interest in finance began with her dad who has enjoyed working in the finance industry for years. Her mom has creative talents and works as an interior designer. Alexis has an older sister who is a high school teacher and a younger brother who attends high school. Lucky, their black Labrador, loves going on walks with the family. Growing up on the beach in Milford, Alexis has enjoyed many beach activities including volleyball, collecting sea glass, and enjoying the water. She also enjoys hiking at Sleeping Giant and golfing with her family.

Alexis loves to travel and would like to plan a trip to Europe to visit Italy and France. Recently, Alexis enjoyed the pristine beaches and sights in Nassau, Bahamas.



Job Opportunities

As the renovation of Lawnhill Terrace Phase 2 continues our general contractor, Viking Construction, is seeking to hire residents to fill the following positions:

HVAC – licensed journeyman and an apprentice needed (requires trade school)

Electric – apprentice needed

Demolition – general laborers needed

General laborers needed for various trades

To apply for a position, please bring a copy of your resume highlighting your relevant experience to the Charter Oak Communities Management Office at 32 - 34 Custer Street, Stamford, Connecticut. Resume help is available through Family Centers with Resident Service Coordinators Ramon Lara, rlara@familycenters.org (203) 977-1400 Ext. 3165 or Mirlande Pressat, mpressat@familycenters.org (203) 977-1400 Ext. 3165.

Please note that this opportunity is only available to residents of Charter Oak Communities properties and Section 8 recipients.

Viking Construction, Inc. is an Affirmative Action, Equal Opportunity Employer.



Resident Profile: Victor Kaluta



Victor Kaluta has lived at Taylor Street Apartments for over 11 years. Victor has been a resident of Stamford since 1991 and has held several jobs in the city over the years, including working at an art-supply store, a paint store and at the Stamford mall. Victor praises the property manage-

ment staff for their work: "Cathy is a wonderful person who works hard and does a great job at Taylor Street. People are friendly and it's a quiet and safe place to live," he says. He also praises the maintenance team for doing a great job keeping the building clean and top notch.

Growing up in Long Island and during high school, Victor's passion for painting and art unfolded. He studied the Renaissance era at Roanoke College in Salem, Virginia and learned about the artist, Leonardo de Vinci, who greatly inspired him. After many years of painting, Victor still enjoys acrylic painting today and says that it is a relaxing hobby.

Victor loves to cook and enjoys cooking chicken, rice and vegetables. He applauds his case worker Rob, of Dubois Center, for his guidance and assistance with cooking, taking him to his medical appointments, shopping and cleaning in his apartment.

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eggshells, grass and plant clippings to the farm. To schedule a drop-off time for compost during the winter months, contact us at pnovjosky@charteroakcommunities.org.

The Farm's corporate sponsors kept Pete extra busy this season, and they are interested in returning next year as well. Employees from Nestlé Waters North America volunteered several times this season. One of the Nestle Waters employees stated, "Spending time at Fairgate Farm is always a rewarding experience. The volunteers do amazing work, and it is nice to be a part of it. At the Farm, I always feel that I gain more than I give." Pete added, "The corporate groups have made a great difference at the Farm, and we're grateful for their time."

The Farm season culminated with the annual Harvest Festival in October. Food samples, fall vegetables, face and pumpkin painting, garlic demonstrations, clowns and a guitarist were on hand for adults and children to enjoy. Additionally, congratulations to Fairgate Farm for being awarded grant funding for the USDA Farmers Market Promotion Program. For the

~ The following poem is written by Fairgate Farm Volunteer Agnes Roberts ~

Come one, come all, volunteer at Fairgate Community Farm in Stamford. Turn the soil, pull the weeds, plant the seeds, and watch them grow. Feel a sense of togetherness, as you watch the vegetables and fruits bloom, then feast upon the labor of your hands and become healthier as the days go by, from eating organically grown plants, nourished by your own hands. Thank you Fairgate Farm for giving me free organically grown foods for healthy living.



first time the Farm will be partnering with other local organic farms to provide the community with a wide selection of fresh, healthy produce available for purchase at an affordable cost. The Fairgate Farm Market will be a great addition! More to come on this in the spring!

Fairgate Farm extends its appreciation to its corporate sponsors, school groups and volunteers for all their hard work and support for a wonderful season! Be sure to follow us at www.FairgateFarm.com!



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Enrollment information will follow by mail.

Grandparents & Grandchildren Ice Cream Social

*By Family Centers Resident Service Coordinators:
Shawnece Simmons, Jean Vaccaro, Nicole Beckham*

This past summer, residents from Clinton Manor, Post House and Fairgate gathered in the Post House community room for an exciting ice cream social event, “Grandparents & Grandchildren Day.” What started out as a simple brainstorming idea regarding what different types of community events could be held soon turned into an afternoon of ice cream sundaes and budding relationships.

The goal for this event was simple: gather residents together for an afternoon featuring ice cream, conversations and interaction to explore how two generations can have a positive impact on each other. Some residents were so excited to participate that they even brought their own grandchildren.

The afternoon began with children and the Resident Service Coordinators (RSCs) setting up the Post House community room with tables and chairs, as well as a mini ice cream bar station with multiple flavors of ice

cream and toppings. The room filled with people while the youngsters took orders and served the customized ice cream sundaes.

After everyone was served, including the children, the fun began with multiple ‘ice-breaker’ games. The room was split into two teams mixed with seniors and children. For 15 minutes each group was responsible for gathering as much information as they could with their new “grandparents” and “grandchildren.” Then the teams stood ready on opposite sides of the room and were given several challenges that they had to complete in the fastest time, including lining up from oldest to youngest and putting each other together in alphabetical order based on first names.



Who would have imagined how competitive seniors and young people could be when a stopwatch was in view? This event was a first, but after watching the exchange and hearing the feedback from residents, it was clear that this would be the first of many more “Grandparents & Grandchildren Days” to come!