



# NEWS RELEASE

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**Photos Attached**

## **GLENDALE COMMUNITY GARDEN PLANTS SEEDS FOR CONNECTION, NUTRITION**

*Heart for the City Community Garden Offers Gardening and Nutrition  
Education for Residents*

**GLENDALE, AZ:** A community hub where the seeds of friendship, nutrition and great health are planted has cropped up in Glendale over the last decade, thanks to a dedicated non-profit organization, committed volunteers and caring city employees.

Heart for the City's Community Garden, located on 69<sup>th</sup> Avenue, just north of Bethany Home Road, is a bustling, green oasis where residents, ranging from schoolchildren to adults, plant fruits and vegetables, take cooking classes, celebrate birthdays and weddings and otherwise bond outdoors.

The non-profit Heart for the City, which focuses on nurturing at-risk children and teens, receives support from the city of Glendale, which allows it to use a scenic neighborhood spot behind Glendale Fire Department Station 152. Glendale also provided infrastructure, including waste disposal and a paved parking lot, while continuously recruiting volunteers to help plant fruits and vegetables, as well as clear debris and complete other work.

Stephanie Fenderson-Gonzales, city of Glendale Community Services Program Coordinator, said the garden developed in a "very organic" way with city officials, Heart for the City, residents and local businesses passionate about good nutrition, sustainability and helping their neighbors. Each one of these partners contributed time and resources to get it off the ground.

"We're all about supporting the community, supporting neighborhoods," Fenderson-Gonzales said. "It brings the community together, gives them a space to gather. They get an education on how to garden. They also receive some nutrition education on the benefits of growing your own food."

The garden has expanded its offerings over the last year from 23 to 34 fruit trees. Gardeners also grow okra, eggplant, chiles, squash, tomatoes, carrots, watermelon, Swiss chard and other produce there in 4-by-8-foot beds. Anyone can rent a bed to grow produce for \$25 annually but that fee is waived for those who are unable to afford it.

The program attracts a diverse range of community members. Children from local schools visit the garden for classes on planting and growing fruits and vegetables. Fenderson-Gonzales teaches



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classes and Heart for the City and participating gardeners often answer questions about gardening to anyone interested. Girl Scout and Eagle Scout troupes, as well as students at a local school have built boxes and shelves for the garden and local businesses and a farmer have donated seeds. Children from Boys & Girls Club branches have volunteered in the garden. The pathways around the lush garden are ADA-accessible, allowing people with disabilities from a local organization to experience the garden.

“We have so many different folks from different parts of the world that have gardens here,” said Joe Enriquez, founder/CEO and president of Heart for the City. “Every person grows \$500 worth of produce per year from the garden. We provide the seeds, water and soil. The city’s been a very good partner.”

Gardeners from China, Mexico, Peru, Guatemala and Hungary are among the residents drawn to the garden. They share recipes, gardening tips and food with each other and bring relatives to join the fun.

Anyone who would like to volunteer in the Community Garden, can visit [Community Volunteer - City of Glendale \(civiclive.com\)](https://civiclive.com) or email [communityengagement@glendaleaz.com](mailto:communityengagement@glendaleaz.com).

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