



# NEWS

**COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION • County of Los Angeles  
2 Coral Circle • Monterey Park, California 91755**

For Immediate Release

Contact: Elisa Vásquez, (323) 890-7415, [elisa.vasquez@lacdc.org](mailto:elisa.vasquez@lacdc.org)

## **2<sup>nd</sup> ANNUAL LONG BEACH FARM DINNER BEING HELD TO BENEFIT LOW-INCOME LONG BEACH RESIDENTS**

Event proceeds will support The Growing Experience Urban Garden and training programs offered to low-income youth at the Carmelitos Public Housing Development and the surrounding Long Beach community

Long Beach – On October 29, 2011, The Growing Experience (TGE) will host its 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Long Beach Farm Dinner Fundraiser. The event, which is open to the public, will be held from 5:30 pm – 9:00 pm at the TGE's Urban Garden within the Carmelitos Public Housing Development (Carmelitos), located at 750 Via Carmelitos, Long Beach. Tickets are \$74 per person. Event proceeds will benefit TGE's site operations, as well as help sustain the training programs offered to low-income youth in the community.

During the event, guests will dine on an exquisite 6-course meal under the stars surrounded by TGE's lush gardens. The menu is developed by Executive Chef Paul Buchanan of Primal Alchemy Catering, who has partnered with TGE on several other events. Each course will be prepared by local chefs from Primal Alchemy, Sip at the Renaissance Hotel, Santa Monica Seafood, and Michael's on Naples, amongst others. To satisfy each diner's sweet tooth, Pastry Chef David Baker will top off their meal with a delectable dessert. All chefs will prepare their



selections using seasonal produce grown onsite at TGE, as well as other local, sustainable ingredients.

Carmelitos is home to over 700 low-income families and senior/disabled residents, and is owned and operated by the Housing Authority of the County of Los Angeles (HACoLA). TGE, which has received several local, state, and national awards, was once a vacant and neglected parcel of land that has been transformed into a thriving urban farm that dedicates 4.5-acres to crop production, and 2.5-acres as a community garden with 60 raised plots where low-income residents can grow their own food.

TGE's crop production supplies fresh produce for a community-supported agriculture (CSA) Program which provides low-income residents with immediate access to affordable, nutritious produce. Through the CSA Program, produce is harvested weekly, packed in individual orders, and picked up directly from the farm by CSA subscribers. Nearly 100 families participate in the affordable CSA Program, which includes simple recipe ideas and nutrition facts about each item in the week's harvest. In so doing, subscribers are able to break away from the cycle of relying on fast food restaurants and convenience marts as their primary source of food, instead replacing it with nutritious produce.

TGE also offers a hands-on after-school and summer training program for young adults to engage in their first paid job experience. Upon course completion, they acquire skills which can be applied toward future employment and educational endeavors. Participants obtain technical skills in sustainable urban agriculture, drip irrigation installation, and drought-tolerant landscaping, as well as "soft" skills such as team-building, conflict resolution, and job search and preparedness.

To purchase tickets for the Farm Dinner Fundraiser, or obtain additional information on TGE, please contact Jimmy Ng, Project Manager at (562) 984-2917. All media inquiries should be directed to Elisa Vásquez, Public Information Officer for HACoLA, at (323) 890-7415.

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