



For Immediate Release

Just Energy Foundation and Boston Cares Officially Open Sustainable Gardens and Outdoor Learning Spaces at Three Boston Area Schools

Ceremonies Take Place at West Zone Early Learning Center, Henderson Inclusion School, and Donald McKay School

Houston, TX, September 19, 2017: Representatives from the [Just Energy Foundation](#), [Boston Cares](#) and [CitySprouts](#) were pleased to be joined by school teachers and Principals to officially open new teaching Gardens and learning spaces at West Zone Early Learning Center, Henderson Inclusion School, and Donald McKay School. The teaching gardens were made possible with support from the Just Energy Foundation's Sustainable Garden initiative.

Staff expressed appreciation and excitement for students to begin their curriculum developed in conjunction with CitySprouts, a nonprofit organization based in Cambridge. CitySprouts introduces school gardens as a core element of children's public education. They partner with public schools to ensure that hands-on learning, environmental stewardship and the experience of growing and eating healthy food become part of every child's life. With the gardens completed, students and community members will help to maintain the teaching spaces.

"We are privileged to be able to bring the outdoor gardens to life as fully accessible, enriching spaces for students and staff to augment their educational programs," says Kandi Terry, Executive Director of the Just Energy Foundation. "By combining our commitment to the environment and exposing youth to unique learning opportunities and settings, we hope to enhance their educational experiences and cultivate a greater sense of fulfillment and achievement. With the Just Energy Sustainable Gardens, we share the vision of CitySprouts to inspire educators, students, and families with a hands-on connection to the food cycle, sustainable agriculture, and the natural environment."

“It has been wonderful for Boston Cares to partner with the Just Energy Foundation around sustainable gardens at Boston Public Schools,” says Patrice Keegan, Executive Director, Boston Cares. “It’s been very satisfying for our volunteers to know that the outdoor garden resources they’ve created over the summer will be quickly leveraged by the schools’ teachers for student learning.”

“Just Energy Foundation’s commitment to sustainable gardens means CitySprouts has been able to launch three new Boston public school partnerships this year,” says Jane Hirschi, Executive Director, CitySprouts. “This includes programming for the youngest students, who are so engaged and energized by what the teaching gardens have to offer.”

“For many of our students, the teaching garden is their first real opportunity to interact with nature and to begin seeing themselves in relation to the larger environment,” says Jean Larrabee, Principal at West Zone Early Learning Center. “It’s also a source of pride for the community and some neighbors have become involved in taking care of the garden.”

Approximately 40 volunteers worked at each location to dig, plant, hammer and paint the garden resources for the use of students and staff now, and well into the future.

About Just Energy Foundation:

The Just Energy Foundation was established in 2013 by Just Energy Group Inc. to help registered Canadian and U.S. charitable organizations secure the resources required to promote the health and well-being of communities in need. Funded entirely by Just Energy, the Foundation invests in local programs that work to enhance the quality of life in Just Energy’s operating markets towards building stronger and supportive communities. Visit justenergyfoundation.com to learn more.

About Boston Cares:

Boston Cares mobilizes individual and corporate volunteers who strengthen communities and improve the lives of people in need. We build relationships with schools and nonprofits with needs that can be filled by volunteer teams; then we recruit, orient & lead reliable groups of volunteers who get the job done. Our year-round programs & seasonal service events generate 76,000 hours at 180+ schools and nonprofits in Greater Boston and eastern Massachusetts communities. Learn more at bostoncares.org.

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