



January 5, 2012

Dear Friends,

As we experience this 2012 New Year and continue our journey in life, it is important to reflect on the concept of Sankofa, which means 'to look back at the past in order to build for the future'. At the beginning of 2011, Sankofa Community Development Corporation (CDC) was leading the Sankofa Farmers Market, a core and consistent project within the organization. The Market is committed to providing fresh local food to our community every Saturday from 10AM to 2PM directly from local farmers, fishers, and producers. Since developing our Farmers Market, Sankofa CDC has expanded to include three additional projects: Veggie Power Dollars, Sankofa Gardens and Urban Farms, and the Sankofa HEAL Project.

The goal of the Veggie Power Dollars (VPD) program is to provide equal access to fresh fruits and vegetables in our community, with lower costs. Since our launching of VPD at the Market, we have served over 43 program participants and dispersed over \$573 of free VPD tokens to marketgoers to purchase fruits and vegetables. In addition, Market attendance numbers have increased by over 400% since its inception, with approximately 300 customers purchasing fresh food every week.

We are also especially proud of the Sankofa Gardens and Urban Farms project. This new development on a 6000 square foot parcel of land in the Lower 9th Ward at St Claude Court and North Rampart Street will grow vegetables, fruits, and herbs. The creation of this second garden follows the current Frederick Douglass Garden at KIPP Renaissance High School, located at Pauline and North Rampart Streets. Sankofa CDC developed this school garden during May 2011, transforming an empty, vacant space covered with rocks into a vibrant area where students grow and harvest vegetables, herbs, and cut ornamental flowers. Starter plants are presently budding in the garden greenhouse and a live compost pile provides organic nutrients for the plants.

Another achievement is our Sankofa HEAL Project, a youth enrichment, leadership, and nutrition education program at KIPP Renaissance School, which teaches young people gardening and leadership skills. The students will also learn about the benefits of consuming fresh fruits and vegetables and how this can reduce risks of diet-related illnesses and heart disease. The HEAL Project activities take place at both the Market and the Douglass Garden as an outdoor classroom and are an extension of our mission to help develop the community through working with youth.

This new year of program activities will be exciting, productive, and fun. The students will continue to manage their Market vendor booth to sell produce from their school garden, as they did during 2011. They will also begin to lead nutritious food preparation demonstrations at the Market using vegetables and fruits from the Douglass Garden. Through their leadership work, the students will become peer educators and youth leaders, serving as future stakeholders of their community.

As we enter 2012, we are proud of our accomplishments and appreciate your continued support of our work to build a stronger and better place to live.

Sincerely,
Rashida Ferdinand
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Sankofa Community Development Corporation

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