

# Potawat Community Food Garden

## United Indian Health Services

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## Potawat Food Garden

I have been a part of College Corps for three years now and paired with my community site Potawat Community Food Garden with United Indian Health Care from the get go. Beginning as a freshmen, I was intimidated by a new area and big school. Potawat Garden welcomed and made a home for me in the community. I found a family in this special place and learned the importance of community.

## Issues Addressed

Potawat Community Food Garden fights food insecurity through organic sustainable gardening to serve native people. They strive to be a place of healing and growth, combating mental illness with restorative gardening practices and social connection through community.

## Impact

Since College Corps has been working at the garden, Potawat has been able to pursue diverse interests and increase productivity altogether. With all our time and labor, we are able to perform all the tasks the garden needs, and work on extra things as well. For example, we have been able to experiment with making and maintaining our own garden compost piles. Also, we are able to seed save and seed collect so that we can save money and continue crop cycles. This year we were even able to build and implement a new green house because we have expanded the garden.



## Experience

At Potawat Garden, College Corp Fellows work hard to maintain the garden and keep up with the planting schedule. On a common work day, some tasks might be to plant, weed, harvest, turn soil, prune, water, and more. Potawat has an orchard, five greenhouses, an herb garden, an educational garden, and a main garden that we are constantly attending to. We help on volunteer days to lead, supervise, and organize groups of volunteers in their tasks. Potawat garden also has market days at the United Indian Hospital where we sell our fresh produce to clients. On market days, we are always busy harvesting in the mornings and interacting with people at the market in the afternoons. During the fall, we are busy picking apples, pressing them, and canning fresh apple cider. During the winter, we spend full days in the kitchen making and canning strawberry, raspberry, and huckleberry jam from our summer harvests. On rainy days in the winter, we make our own tea with dried herbs from the herb garden, which we sell at markets.

## Conclusion

Potawat's motto is that Food is Good Medicine. Gardening and taking care of the food is part of the healing powers. Potawat garden taught me that connecting with our roots in the garden and our society is crucial for a balanced life. College Corps has helped the garden to thrive so that it can continue to bring healing to the community through food, gardening, and togetherness.