**Board, Staff & Volunteers**

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- **John Carl**, Executive Vice-President
- **Raymond Smith**, Vice-President
- **Cynthia Nixon**, Treasurer
- **Jean Gerbini**, Secretary
- **Ann Pfaus** and **Deborah Bennett**, At-Large
- **Michael Whiteman**, Immediate Past President

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- **Sharon DiLorenzo**, Program Manager
- **Will Malcolm**, Food Access Program Manager
- **Matthew Schueler**, Grow Center Planner
- **Jessica Trowbridge**, Operations Manager
- **Elizabeth Boyer**, Food Hub Coordinator
- **Audrey Bridge**, Administrative Assistant
- **Liz Burrichter**, Squash Hunger/Outreach Coordinator
- **Julia Cosgrove**, Produce Project Farm Manager
- **Katie Doyle**, Educator
- **Brooklyn Esposito**, Volunteer Coordinator
- **Brent Irving**, Healthy Communities Coordinator
- **Peter Jenkins**, Produce Project Coordinator

### Volunteer Devotees

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<tr>
<th>Individuals</th>
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<tr>
<td>Priscilla Fairbank</td>
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<td>Olivia Fuller</td>
<td>ARC of Schenectady County</td>
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<td>Carolyn George</td>
<td>Center for Disability Services</td>
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<td>Eugenie Gleason</td>
<td>Central Michigan University</td>
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<td>Alene Hearst</td>
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<td>Chris Howard</td>
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<td>Rob Kietlinski</td>
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<td>Ronda Lyons</td>
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### David LaVoie
- Barbara Lawrence
- Dean and Liz Leith
- Megan Leitzinger
- John and Peggy Leon
- Susanna and Michael Lia
- Gary Lind and Ellen Kelly-Lind
- Thomas and Sandra Linendoll
- Donald Lipkin and Mary Bowyn
- Karen Lipson and Alan Goldberg
- Meika Lo and Matt Aliinger
- Kersten Lorcher and Sylvia Browne
- Katherine and Hugh Roome
- Dorcas and Kenneth Rose
- Mario and Brenda Rosenbaum
- Jennifer Rosenbaum and David Herman
- Paul Rosenberg
- Dominic and Alice Rotondi
- Thomas Rouke and Dorothy Howey
- Todd Rupright
- Colleen Ryan and Eric Hoppel
- Eve and Spencer Ryan
- Christina and Daniel Dan
- Laury Saligian
- Elinor and Robert Sanger
- Katherine Satterlee
- Peter and Karin Savio
- James and Joan Savio
- Allison and Lee Greenstein
- Kay and James Schlemcham
- Nancy Sciocetti
- Andrew M. Bailey
- Casey and Rachel Seller
- Sheryl and Rick Seppa
- Robin and Jim Sevinsky
- Joel Sheik and Dr. Farhan Sheikh
- Samantha and John Shipboard
- Susan Shipboard and Jim Ferris
- David Shippe and Ann Volpe
- Cynthia and Herbert Shultz
- Kurt Stjbloom
- Brad and Susan Smi
- Edward and Kathy Spain
- Susan Stah-Cooper and Chris Cooper
- J. Spencer and Pat Staudigl
- Punck Stephens and Lisa Tackley
- Carlton Stwert
- Charles and Pamela Stock
- Deborah and Alan Stock
- Mary Stock
- Howard and Margaret Stener
- Meredith Strefen
- Dennis and Margaret Sullivan
- Ms. C. Andrews Sullivan
- Michele Susko and Farid Sanai
- George Tarron and Suesi Teller
- Philip and Martha Trumain
- Frank and Liz Therien
- Patty Thompson
- John and Valerie Thompson
- Catherine Townsend
- Ida Traschen
- Janet and Noel Trumbl
- Terry and Dan Tyson
- Judith Ratner
- Patricia Raunp
- Sandra Ray
- James and Reisa Reed
- Cheryl Reeves and Martha Schultz
- Pamela Relkah and Gary Toth
- Rhonda L. Reinsier
- Timothy C. Reiss
- Priscilla Richards and Michael Fanning

### Florence Richardson
- Rachel Riemann and Atsushi Aker
- Marlan Beach Smith and Res Smith
- Christina F. Roberts
- Steven and Janice Rocklin
- Elizabeth Rodriguez and Darren Scott
- Joan and Raymond Rogers-Harrington
- Katherine and Hugh Roome
- Dorcas and Kenneth Rose
- Mario and Brenda Rosenbaum
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- Christina and Daniel Ryan
- Laury Saligian
- Elinor and Robert Sanger
- Katherine Satterlee
- Peter and Karin Savio
- James and Joan Savio

### Cathy McCall
- Dr. James and Amy McDonnell
- Nancy McEwan
- John McFadden
- Chris McKenna
- Rance and Linda McKenna
- Peter and Donna Meixner
- David Merzit
- Edward Miller and Laura Garrison
- Sandra Misiewicz
- Chris and Jill Montiello
- Shawn Morris and John Wellspeak
- Stephen and Dr. Farhan Sheikh
- John and Pat Mulligan
- Joseph Murphy
- William Nechemien
- Ray Newkrick and Christy D’Ambrosio
- Tom Nitido and Wendy Saunders
- Mary Karen and Mike Noonan
- Jose Mondiel Ochoa
- Noreen Ortiz Plette
- Marcus Oselinsky
- Jason and Lisa Packer
- Diane Pancoski
- Margaret Paris
- Theresa and David Parry
- Audra and Randy Passonno
- Wendy Pattison and Bill Schroeder
- Jane Payne and Janice Stock
- Richard Peck and Vincent Gallilari
- Laura and Ken Perrault
- Pam and Randy Perrault
- Margaret Paris
- Michael Passonno Jr.
- Linda Passaretti
- Susan Poisson-Dollar
- Melanie Peota
- Mimsy Pye
- Dave Rhodes
- Diane Rivers
- Nancy Ross
- Lisa Roth
- Mark Rubenstein
- James Russell
- Kay Schlembach
- Perry Smith
- Howard Stoner
- Katie Tiedemann
- Susan Tolk
- Jamie Vaughn
- Dorsey Whitehead
- Grazia Yaeger

### Doug Burns
- Amy Test
- Grace Buchanan
- hoop Burns
- Dorothy Cadet
- Jonathan Cassidy
- Laury Clapper
- Emma Cohen
- Seth Cohen
- Suzanne Conroy
- Kevin Cornils
- Nick Crouse
- Donna Dorsey
- Ann Dusza
- Tommi Evans

### Timothy C. Reiss
- Dr. Richard Propp
- Laura and Ken Perrault
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- Tommi Evans

### Joseph Visalli and Matias Flowers
- Gail Volk
- Dr. Richard Wagner
- Jane Wait
- Erin and Corey Walsh
- Beth Walsh and Chris Maier
- Edward Warren
- Enid Wattsy
- Jessica Webster
- Dawn Stuart Weintraub
- Dorsey M. Whitehead
- Elizabeth and Wayne Willson
- Paul Winkeler and Victoria Balikoski
- Laura Wikowski
- Lianne and Ted Watlady
- Karen and John Wolner
- Darlene Yule
- Honorable Ken Zalewski and Mike Oliver
- Audra Zilberman
- Lillian Zoda

### The Adirondack Trust Company
- AFLAC New York
- AJS Masonry
- Ale House
- Behan Communications
- Bethlehem Garden Club
- Brown’s Brewing Co.
- Bryce Funeral Home
- DeFazio Imports
- Digital Sprints
- Druthers Brewing Company
- Excelsior College
- G.A. Bove & Sons, Inc.
- Greenbush Tape and Label
- Groff Networks
- Hope 7 Community Center
- Hudson Valley Community College
- Kal-Harbour, Inc.
- Latham Medical Group
- Lori Schindler Realty
- Macnich Builders, Ltd.
- Matt’s Music Together
- MRC Kicks and Bath
- Modern Press
- Mountain Top Septic
- Muddalady Flats
- Nine Pin Ciderworks
- Park Pub Restaurant & Catering
- Pastel & Rosen LLP
- Rensselaer County Chamber of Commerce
- The Ruck
- Sand Lake Garden Club
- Saratoga Hospital
- St. Paul’s Church in the City of Albany
- Stanley Paper
- Sunbelt Graphics Inc.
- Troy Police Benevolent Association
- Troy Web Consulting
- Veterans Business Council
- Veen’s Service Station
- Walter Pratt & Sons, Inc.
- William Fredette Painting
Dear Friends,

In the beginning of 2015, I confessed to a fellow staff member that sometimes, when walking into the Urban Grow Center to start my day, I had to pinch myself just to make sure it was real. After 10 years of planning, fundraising, construction – and more fundraising – Capital Roots had finally created the space that would allow our programs to grow to their fullest capacity. And did they ever!

Support from donors, farmers, sponsors, and a dedicated corps of volunteers allowed our Squash Hunger program to rescue and deliver more than 80,000 pounds of produce to food pantries, shelters, and soup kitchens. When we gleaned 10,000+ pounds of apples from Saratoga Apple, they were easily stored in one of our new walk-in coolers – to be distributed to emergency feeding programs in Albany, Rensselaer, Schenectady and Saratoga counties.

When we look at the impressive stats for Capital Roots’ food access programs in 2015, we look first to our Capital Campaign donors, whose generosity allowed this growth to occur. Sales from our 16 Healthy Stores grew 66% in 2015, with more than 43 different kinds of items sold, thanks to our store owner partners, who order culturally appropriate fruits and vegetables for their patrons. This figure includes Capital Roots’ on-site Produce Market, which has found a lively customer base among our neighbors in North Central Troy. Our Virtual Veggie Mobile delivered 75,000 pounds of wholesale priced produce to childcare centers, Head Start programs, and food pantries, allowing 80 organizations that serve low-income families to double the amount of produce they served to their clients. Roughly 49% of the produce Capital Roots sold in 2015 was purchased year-round from local producers – an increase of 20% from 2014. Buying from local producers helps support our regional farm economy and reduces the environmental impact of our food purchases.

Our new location right off 787/Route 7 and on a central bus route allows community gardeners to easily access the free seeds, seedlings, and educational classes we offer them. In 2015 we marked the opening of our 49th and 50th community gardens – in East Greenbush and on Ida Street in South Troy.

As I look back on the growth that characterized 2015 – and continues into 2016 – the Urban Grow Center no longer feels like an unbelievable dream. It is a realized dream – thanks to our generous donors and the incredible dedication of our staff and board – all of whom contributed to this project. If you have not already seen the Center in action, I hope you’ll stop by for a tour soon, to see what we have already accomplished – and to participate as we begin to envision the impact that Phase II of the Urban Grow Center will have.

With gratitude,

[signature]
2015 AT A GLANCE

16 Healthy Stores
49,475 residents served by the Veggie Mobile®
65 Veggie Rx participants
50 community gardens
411,000 pounds of produce distributed through the Food Hub
882 community garden plots
80,000 pounds of produce donated through Squash Hunger

Garry and JoAnn Kearns
Alexander and Gail Keeler
Honorable Noelle Kinsch and Darius Shahinfar
Christine Kleinegger
Rebekah and Curtis Klope
Lynn Kopka
Lawrence and Ellen Kotlow
Linda and Matthew London
Beth Manning
Gordon and Linda Mappes
Eileen and Mark McCarthy
Barbara and John McDonald
Assemblyman John T. McDonald III and Renee McDonald
Don and Elizabeth Ann McLaughlin
Wendy and Rudy Medra
Wayne Metsch and Lynn Gelzheiser
Dr. Lewis and Phyllis Morrison
Paul Murray
Katherine Nadeau and Jimmy Viekind
Kevin and Pat O’Bryan
Theresa Page
Robert and Loretta Parsons
Ann Pfla and Dave Hochfelder
Deane and Jeffrey Pfeil
Rich and Sally Pombo
Julia Popova
Jared Ray
William Reinhardt and Gail Landsman
Moira and Thomas Rienzo
Elena Rosenbaum and Steve DiStefano
Jeffrey Sherrin
Janice and Stan Smith
Adam and Jeanne Stewart
Jane Bucci Stewart
Erin Tobin and Roger Bearden
Congressman Paul Tonko
Edward and Karen Utter
Rebecca and Corrie Whalen
Chris Wilber Howard and Richard Howard
Accu Care Home Health Service
Architecture +
Bethlehem Central High School
Brown & Brown, Attorneys at Law
Ceralink
Citizens Bank Foundation
CL King & Associates
Crisalull Bros. Plumbing & Heating
Duncan & Cahill
Edward Jones Investments
Emma Willard Student Philanthropic Club
First Unitarian Universalist Society of Albany
Flink Smith LLC
Foy Foundation Advised Fund of the The Community Foundation for the Greater Capital Region
Guth DeConzo Consulting Engineers, PC
Hodgson Russ LLP
Honest Weight Food Coop
Ironworkers Local #12
Judith Fetterley Donor Advised Fund of The Community Foundation for the Greater Capital Region
Manna CPA’s

Lawrence and Marie Shore Donor Advised Fund of The Community Foundation for the Greater Capital Region
Martin, Shudt, Wallace, DiLorenzo & Johnson
Michael A. Tobin & Associates, CPA’s, PC
The Neary Group
Nigo Companies
Pioneer Bank
Pombo Wealth Management
The Rensseler Club
Rose & Kierman
Sage Brothers Company
Schwartz Heslin Group
Sequence Development
Simmons Machine Tool Corporation
Solomon Apartment Management
Towne, Ryan & Partners, PC.
Truusto Bank
United Group of Companies
Whitmer Osterman & Hanna
Family Farmers
($250 - $499)
John and Mary Ann Allen
Lisa and Chris Allison
Anonymous
Barbara and George Arakelian
Sharon C. Awramik
Patricia A. Bayly
Katherine Bean
Jonathan Bick
Tom and Susan Blandy
Steve and Sarah Boggs
David and Harriet Bertman
Peter Bowden and Sharon DiLorenzo
Michael Boley and Karen McKeown
Charles and Kathryn Boylen
Neil and Rosemary Brown
Christopher and Kathleen Burke
Rebecca Chriss-tine and Carter White
Judy and Tom Clement
Jim and Phyllis Conroy
Dr. Bruce and Robin Coplin
Kevin Cornils
Sanjay Correa and Carol Hyde
TJ Coté and Will Malcolm
Frank Cucito and Laura Zima
Donna E. and Wilson Crane
Nicholas and Sita Crouse
Victoria and Tom Crowell
Hon. Peter G. Crumney
Richard and Monique Cunningham
Sharon and Edward Cufoli
Diane and Joe Deas
Mary Ann Deignan
Christina and Alex Dell
Pat and Emil DeSoffli
Heather Diddell and Samuel House
Stephanie and Chris Doyle
Jonathan and Julia Elbaum
Inge Eley
Drs. Kyle and Anna Flik
Reg Foster and Maryann Jablonowskii
Deborah and Kenneth Gall
Janet E. Gargiulo
Anthony Garner
Lester and Karen Gerhardt

350 students in the Taste Good Series
27 Produce Project students

49,475 community gardens
32 weekly Veggie Mobile® steps in the Capital Region
2 Capital Roots 2015 Annual Report

3 | Capital Roots 2015 Annual Report

Capital Roots 2015 Annual Report | 16
For Capital Roots, 2015 kicked off early on December 3, 2014, when members of the capital campaign committee officially cut the ribbon (actually a grape vine) on our new Urban Grow Center. At the ribbon cutting, Executive Director Amy Klein introduced our new name – Capital Roots – chosen to communicate the full breadth of the organization’s fresh food access, education, and urban greenspaces.

The first full year in our new headquarters saw the promise of the Urban Grow Center fulfilled, as Capital Roots’ fresh food access programs expanded to serve broader audiences. Our online ordering platform, the Virtual Veggie Mobile, grew rapidly, helping regional farmers access new markets, and allowing inner-city residents and organizations to purchase affordable fresh local produce. A $50,000 grant from the Schenectady Foundation allowed us to bring the Virtual Veggie Mobile to the Schenectady Community Action Program, while grants from the Wright Family Fund and Carlillian Foundation supported the purchase of a new-to-us vehicle to service Schenectady county organizations and farms.

And a new program – Healthy Streets – launched focusing on making our communities healthier by creating safe infrastructure to walk and bike in Capital Region’s cities.

At the 9th annual Autumn Evening in the Garden event in September, Capital Roots kicked off the celebration of our 40th year with a special auction, which raised $32,000 to purchase new vehicles for the Squash Hunger and Community Gardens programs.

Fittingly, the close of 2015 also marked the close of our $2.8 million dollar capital campaign for Phase I of the Urban Grow Center. What began with leadership gifts from SEFCU, campaign co-chairs E. Stewart Mary and Kimberly Sanger Jones, the Massry Family Foundation, MVP Healthcare, First Niagara Bank, and the McCarthy Charities closed with an extremely generous donation in December from Callanan Industries, whose donation of three properties, including our former headquarters at 40 River Street, provided the last funds needed to reach our goal. None of the accomplishments of 2015 would have happened without the steadfast support of Capital Roots’ committed Board of Directors, hard-working staff, donors new and longstanding, and dedicated volunteers.

Thank you!
community garden, was celebrated at a grand opening event with the community. Together, these two gardens, along with the expansion of the Paul’s Place garden in Troy, added 31 new plots to the program, bringing the total number of plots to 882.

Capital Roots’ Educator hosted 250 people in 26 educational classes at gardens and other locations in the community, including the Urban Grow Center. Classes advised gardeners on how to get the most from their plots and keep their gardens healthy and thriving. The Urban Grow Center allowed the program to hold more on-site classes and garden sign-ups, while helping the program build efficiency with a new garage and loading dock.

“[It has brought me closer to my neighbors…] I don’t know all of their names, but if they see me in the garden or on my way to the garden they’ll ask me how things are going and how my plot is doing. I have this romantic notion that I can feed my entire neighborhood from my little plot. And I try!... It cements the community.”

- Diane Lew-Snider, 2015 Community Gardener
Our Veggie Mobile® and Veggie Mobile® Sprout mobile markets travel into Capital Region city neighborhoods in Albany, Rensselaer and Schenectady counties, year round, five days per week, selling produce at wholesale cost to residents with limited access to healthy food.

In addition, more than 35,000 pounds of produce was given away through the Taste and Take program, providing customers with a recipe, tasting, and ingredients, utilizing produce that can be found right on the Veggie Mobile®.

Through Veggie Rx in 2015, Capital Roots partnered with Whitney M. Young Health to prescribe diabetic and hypertensive patients with coupons redeemable on the Veggie Mobile® for fresh produce. The program ensures that residents with nutrition-related illnesses are able to access and benefit from the fresh, affordable local produce Capital Roots provides. In 2015, 88 percent of Veggie Rx coupons were redeemed, the highest percentage for the program to date.

“I’m planning on giving up my car. A big reason for that is the Sprout. It’s going to be much easier for me to ... not have to go out and get the food myself... I like the food selection. It’s convenient, especially in the summer when local food is available. The food is high quality. The prices are very reasonable—lower, even, than most stores where you don’t always know where that food is coming from. I think it is essential for me.”

- Rodderick Brumbaugh, 2015 Sprout Customer
Virtual Veggie Mobile®
Online Farmer’s Market

By the Numbers:
- 93,000 pounds of fresh produce distributed throughout the year to customers
- 275 individual and business customers participated in the program’s inaugural year
- 50 regional farmers sold produce and value-added products through the online marketplace

Virtual Veggie Mobile® kicked off its first full year in 2015. Through this online marketplace, local farmers list their products for purchase by daycare centers, schools, group homes and other wholesale consumers. Capital Roots is also piloting an individual customer program, with pickup locations at CEO in Troy and ACAP in Albany. In addition to the same fresh produce that can be found on the Veggie Mobile® and Veggie Mobile® Sprout, the Virtual Veggie Mobile® also offers locally sourced meat, dairy, and value-added products such as maple, yogurt, granola, beef jerky and honey.

It was a groundbreaking first full year for the program. More than 97 percent of customers who registered placed orders throughout the year with the average order increasing in size by nearly 40 percent. Capital Roots delivered more than 400 orders to these customers and prepared more than 720 orders for individual customers.

“When someone says they’re bringing in a new pilot program, something that’s going to benefit us, you always have a little skepticism, but as soon as I opened my first bag, I was sold; I was in love. The fruits and vegetables are phenomenal. And I’ve been really excited to not only be able to see the difference in the amount of money I’m spending to remain healthy for myself and my family, but also the fact that it’s right where I live and work.”

- Jessica DeJesus, 2015 VVM Customer

Environmental Impact
At the Urban Grow Center

Capital Roots’ spent its first full year in the Urban Grow Center in 2015. A vast change from the organization’s former headquarters, the building gave the organization the opportunity to focus on our environmental impact and make steps toward carbon neutrality. These steps included the installation of solar panels and stormwater infrastructure improvements, which prevent untreated runoff from entering the sewer system and protect the Hudson River from pollution.

The 135 solar panels were installed on the roof of our building in 2015 by community partner, Empire Solar. The installation is expected to cut Capital Roots’ dependence on the grid by nearly one-third. The two lower rooftops house the Grow Center’s green, living roofs. This 1,600 square foot mix of native and drought resistant plants provides habitat for birds and insects, absorbs and filters pollutants from rainwater and helps cool the environment around it. The roof’s layer of plants and soil also helps reduce energy costs by acting as natural insulation.

Water from the green roofs make their way into the cistern out front. When this overflows, water flows into a shallow bioretention basin. Storm water that enters this “rain garden” has a chance to naturally seep into the ground and/or be filtered by the plants before entering the storm drain. A porous pavement parking lot allows stormwater to seep through instead of running off the lot with vehicle oils. The water is filtered by gravel, and makes its way to the soil below, where natural systems help remediate oils, far from storm drains and our rivers.
Squash Hunger is Capital Roots’ food donation initiative where volunteers collect and distribute fresh produce to food pantries, soup kitchens and shelters throughout Albany, Rensselaer, Schenectady and southern Saratoga counties. Collection bins are placed at various locations throughout the Capital Region allowing gardeners, farmers and grocery shoppers to donate fresh food. In 2015, the program organized and implemented a produce drive with Shop Rite Supermarkets where 700 pounds of produce was collected. Capital Roots community gardeners also donated 3,150 pounds of produce to add to collection bins. The move to the Urban Grow Center, and the addition of cooler space, a pallet jack and loading bay, improved the efficiency of the program and allowed the staff to store produce for more equitable and broader geographic distribution to more rural pantries and shelters.

“The Community Meal Program (at Unity House) makes lunches for 100 to 200 people every single day of the year. We run on a minimal budget, which means that produce is hard to prioritize in purchasing. Nevertheless, fresh food is at the front of our mind as we feed people, so having a weekly delivery from Capital Roots makes all the difference in the world.”
- Amy Halloran, Unity House Chef

The Produce Project is a year-round job and life-skills training program for inner city youth. Troy High School students are given a stipend and school credit for cultivating the 2.5-acre youth-powered urban farm and selling their harvest crops at their Farm Stand and the Delmar Farmers Market. As they learn about the nutritional benefits of fresh, local food, they also take home a portion of what they grow to share with their families.

In 2015, students engaged in lessons on tool maintenance, plant families, seed sowing, food heritage gardens, market prep and customer service, farm assessment, and food systems. The students had the opportunity to participate in a cooking class series, featuring local guest chefs, an opportunity created by the move to the Urban Grow Center.

Throughout the summer and into the fall, students and volunteers prepared the farm for the planting of a new orchard, improved the farm compost area and prepared the slope and lower south section of the farm for usable activity and planting space. Students also helped to construct a pergola shade structure.

“When you grow up in the city and you see bad things going on, it’s good to know there’s a place like this where people can go and forget all about it. It’s a safe haven and a place to get your mind off of things...Over the summer we did a lot of community service at Unity House and I thought that was really cool because growing up, we’d always go there...so it’s cool to go back to where you started and give back to those who helped you.”
- Nadia Woodby, 2015 Produce Project Student
Healthy Stores makes fresh produce available daily to inner-city residents throughout Albany, Rensselaer and Schenectady counties. Participating stores are provided custom refrigeration units that are stocked twice (or more) a week by Capital Roots staff, providing residents access to fresh produce where they shop every day.

Two new locations were added to the roster in 2015, one in Albany and a second in Rensselaer, and Capital Roots outreach staff spent time doing tastings outside some of the stores to network with residents and inform them of the new produce available at their neighborhood store. Many of the existing stores increased the frequency of their order per week as a result of growing demand.

In the Urban Grow Center’s first full year, the onsite Produce Market brought many neighbors through the doors of Capital Roots. Customers to the market had the unique opportunity to not only purchase fresh fruits and vegetables, but also meat, dairy and local value-added products, including eggs, yogurt, granola, maple products, and more.

“The product we’ve been getting is nice and fresh and tastes so good. Instead of buying two oranges, for example, people end up buying three or four. The deals we get from (Capital Roots) are actually spreading around and we are dropping prices.”
- Nicole Tlaiji, Midtown Market Owner

The Taste Good Series is a six-week nutrition education program where students in pre-school through second grade are introduced to new fruits and vegetables and learn about the benefits of fresh produce. Capital Roots’ Educator visits city classrooms throughout Albany, Rensselaer and Schenectady counties, incorporating fresh food samples, reading, games, art, basic nutrition, horticulture and other fun activities into hands-on lessons designed to inspire children to adopt their own healthy lifestyles.

In 2015, students learned about plant life cycles, pollination, where food comes from, food preparation, and how healthy food affects your body. Capital Roots also partnered with the Schenectady Jewish Community Center to bring the Taste Good Series to their after-school program. Another partnership with the Seymour Fox Foundation allowed Capital Roots to offer the program to new schools in the region. Capital Roots staff had the opportunity to present again at the Capital District Childcare Council conference, highlighting the program to hundreds of teachers in the region.

“The children really looked forward to it. I could see them change as the weeks went on. The children loved planting and getting to taste the fruits and vegetables. They get to taste new foods. They also learn about where the fruits and vegetables come from. The plant system, root, leaf, etc. Katie is so engaging and enthusiastic. It is a wonderful program!”
- Jo-Ann Stankus, Mercy Cares for Kids Teacher
Healthy Stores
Fresh Food Fast

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Taste Good Series
Nurturing Healthy Lifestyles

The Taste Good Series is a six-week nutrition education program where students in pre-school through second grade are introduced to new fruits and vegetables and learn about the benefits of fresh produce. Capital Roots’ Educator visits city classrooms throughout Albany, Rensselaer and Schenectady counties, incorporating fresh food samples, reading, games, art, basic nutrition, horticulture and other fun activities into hands-on lessons designed to inspire children to adopt their own healthy lifestyles.

In 2015, students learned about plant life cycles, pollination, where food comes from, food preparation, and how healthy food affects your body. Capital Roots also partnered with the Schenectady Jewish Community Center to bring the Taste Good Series to their after-school program. Another partnership with the Seymour Fox Foundation allowed Capital Roots to offer the program to new schools in the region. Capital Roots staff had the opportunity to present again at the Capital District Childcare Council conference, highlighting the program to hundreds of teachers in the region.

“The children really looked forward to it. I could see them change as the weeks went on. The children loved planting and getting to taste the fruits and vegetables. They get to taste new foods. They also learn about where the fruits and vegetables come from. The plant system, root, leaf, etc. Katie is so engaging and enthusiastic. It is a wonderful program!”

- Jo-Ann Stankus, Mercy Cares for Kids Teacher
The Community Meal Program (at Unity House) makes lunches for 100 to 200 people every single day of the year. We run on a minimal budget, which means that produce is hard to prioritize in purchasing. Nevertheless, fresh food is at the front of our mind as we feed people, so having a weekly delivery from Capital Roots makes all the difference in the world.  
- Amy Halloran, Unity House Chef

“When you grow up in the city and you see bad things going on, it’s good to know there’s a place like this where people can go and forget all about it. It’s a safe haven and a place to get your mind off of things...Over the summer we did a lot of community service at Unity House and I thought that was really cool because growing up, we’d always go there...so it’s cool to go back to where you started and give back to those who helped you.”  
- Nadia Woodby, 2015 Produce Project Student
### Virtual Veggie Mobile®

**Online Farmer’s Market**

**BY THE NUMBERS:**

- 275 individual and business customers participated in the program’s inaugural year
- 93,000 pounds of fresh produce distributed throughout the year to customers
- 50 regional farmers sold produce and value-added products through the online marketplace

The **Virtual Veggie Mobile®** kicked off its first full year in 2015. Through this online marketplace, local farmers list their products for purchase by daycare centers, schools, group homes and other wholesale consumers. Capital Roots is also piloting an individual customer program, with pickup locations at CEO in Troy and ACAP in Albany. In addition to the same fresh produce that can be found on the Veggie Mobile® and Veggie Mobile® Sprout, the Virtual Veggie Mobile® also offers locally sourced meat, dairy, and value-added products such as maple, yogurt, granola, beef jerky and honey.

It was a groundbreaking first full year for the program. More than 97 percent of customers who registered placed orders throughout the year with the average order increasing in size by nearly 40 percent. Capital Roots delivered more than 400 orders to these customers and prepared more than 720 orders for individual customers.

"When someone says they’re bringing in a new pilot program, something that’s going to benefit us, you always have a little skepticism, but as soon as I opened my first bag, I was sold; I was in love. The fruits and vegetables are phenomenal. And I’ve been really excited to not only be able to see the difference in the amount of money I’m spending to remain healthy for myself and my family, but also the fact that it’s right where I live and work.”

- Jessica DeJesus, 2015 VVM Customer

### Environmental Impact

**At the Urban Grow Center**

Fresh Food At Work

Capital Roots’ spent its first full year in the Urban Grow Center in 2015. A vast change from the organization’s former headquarters, the building gave the organization the opportunity to focus on our environmental impact and make steps toward carbon neutrality. These steps included the installation of solar panels and stormwater infrastructure improvements, which prevent untreated runoff from entering the sewer system and protect the Hudson River from pollution.

The 135 solar panels were installed on the roof of our building in 2015 by community partner, Empire Solar. The installation is expected to cut Capital Roots’ dependence on the grid by nearly one-third. The two lower rooftops house the Grow Center’s green, living roofs. This 1,600 square foot mix of native and drought resistant plants provides habitat for birds and insects, absorbs and filters pollutants from rainwater and helps cool the environment around it. The roof’s layer of plants and soil also helps reduce energy costs by acting as natural insulation.

Water from the green roofs make their way into the cistern out front. When this overflows, water flows into a shallow bioretention basin. Storm water that enters this “rain garden” has a chance to naturally seep into the ground and/or be filtered by the plants before entering the storm drain. A porous pavement parking lot allows stormwater to seep through instead of running off the lot with vehicle oils. The water is filtered by gravel, and makes its way to the soil below, where natural systems help remediate oils, far from storm drains and our rivers.
INCOME......$1,993,545

- Government Grants $728,986 (37%)
- Capital Campaign Donations $290,491 (15%)
- Corporate Sponsorship $250,006 (13%)
- Individual Donations $181,769 (9%)
- Private Foundation Grants $166,388 (8%)
- Special Events $101,871 (5%)
- Mobile Market Produce Sales $100,488 (5%)
- On-Line Market Produce Sales $60,277 (3%)
- Healthy Stores Sales $47,710 (2%)
- Community Gardens $46,174 (2%)
- Other $22,434
- Produce Project Sales $13,425
- Investments <$16,474>

EXPENSES......$1,524,036

- Mobile Markets $304,608 (20%)
- Education/Outreach/Squash Hunger $170,102 (11%)
- Produce Project $169,223 (11%)
- Community Gardens $142,603 (9%)
- Operations $143,944 (9%)
- Healthy Stores $120,302 (8%)
- Healthy Places Project $91,075 (6%)
- Fundraising $76,647 (5%)
- Grow Center $71,707 (5%)
- On-Line Market $50,774 (3%)
- Depreciation Expense $138,712
- Office Space $35,374
- Professional Services $12,917
- Miscellaneous <$3,951>

Our Veggie Mobile® and Veggie Mobile® Sprout mobile markets travel into Capital Region city neighborhoods in Albany, Rensselaer and Schenectady counties, year round, five days per week, selling produce at wholesale cost to residents with limited access to healthy food.

In addition, more than 35,000 pounds of produce was given away through the Taste and Take program, providing customers with a recipe, tasting, and ingredients, utilizing produce that can be found right on the Veggie Mobile®.

Through Veggie Rx in 2015, Capital Roots partnered with Whitney M. Young Health to prescribe diabetic and hypertensive patients with coupons redeemable on the Veggie Mobile® for fresh produce. The program ensures that residents with nutrition-related illnesses are able to access and benefit from the fresh, affordable local produce Capital Roots provides. In 2015, 88 percent of Veggie Rx coupons were redeemed, the highest percentage for the program to date.

“I’m planning on giving up my car. A big reason for that is the Sprout. It’s going to be much easier for me to ... not have to go out and get the food myself... I like the food selection. It’s convenient, especially in the summer when local food is available. The food is high quality. The prices are very reasonable—lower, even, than most stores where you don’t always know where that food is coming from. I think it is essential for me.”

- Rodderick Brumbaugh, 2015 Sprout Customer
Each year, Capital Roots makes garden plots available in New York’s Capital Region through Community Gardens. Providing free seeds, tilling, water and educational classes, the program provides nearly 4,000 residents with the opportunity to grow their own food.

In 2015, Capital Roots added two new gardens to the roster: Ida Street in Troy and the East Greenbush garden. Ida Street, our 50th community garden, was celebrated at a grand opening event with the community. Together, these two gardens, along with the expansion of the Paul’s Place garden in Troy, added 31 new plots to the program, bringing the total number of plots to 882.

Capital Roots’ Educator hosted 250 people in 26 educational classes at gardens and added 31 new plots to the program, bringing the total number of plots to 882.

“It has brought me closer to my neighbors...I don’t know all of their names, but if they see me in the garden or on my way to the garden they'll ask me how things are going and how my plot is doing. I have this romantic notion that I can feed my entire neighborhood from my little plot. And I try!...It cements the community.”

- Diane Lew-Snider, 2015 Community Gardener

ASSETS

Current Assets

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<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Amount</th>
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<td>Cash and Cash Equivalents</td>
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<td>Prepaid Expenses and Other Assets</td>
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<td><strong>Total Current Assets</strong></td>
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Property and Equipment, Net                   | $3,107,726 |

Pledges Receivable, Net of Current Portion    | $351,018  |

Investments - Restricted                      | $232,398  |

**TOTAL ASSETS**                              | **$4,829,183** |

LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS

Current Liabilities

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<td>Accrued Payroll and Related Expenses</td>
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Long-term Liabilities

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Net Assets

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<td>Temporarily Restricted</td>
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<td>Permanently Restricted</td>
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<td><strong>Total Net Assets</strong></td>
<td><strong>$3,240,765</strong></td>
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**TOTAL LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS** | **$4,829,183** |
For Capital Roots, 2015 kicked off early on December 3, 2014, when members of the capital campaign committee officially cut the ribbon (actually a grape vine) on our new Urban Grow Center. At the ribbon cutting, Executive Director Amy Klein introduced our new name – Capital Roots – chosen to communicate the full breadth of the organization’s fresh food access, education, and urban greening services.

The first full year in our new headquarters saw the promise of the Urban Grow Center fulfilled, as Capital Roots’ fresh food access programs expanded to serve broader audiences. Our online ordering platform, the Virtual Veggie Mobile, grew rapidly, helping regional farmers access new markets, and allowing inner-city residents and organizations to purchase affordable fresh local produce. A $50,000 grant from the Schenectady Foundation allowed us to bring the Virtual Veggie Mobile to the Schenectady Community Action Program, while grants from the Wright Family Fund and Carllilian Foundation supported the purchase of a new-to-us vehicle to service Schenectady county organizations and farms.

And a new program – Healthy Streets – launched focusing on making our communities healthier by creating safe infrastructure to walk and bike in Capital Region’s cities.

At the 9th annual Autumn Evening in the Garden event in September, Capital Roots kicked off the celebration of our 40th year with a special auction, which raised $32,000 to purchase new vehicles for the Squash Hunger and Community Gardens programs.

Fittingly, the close of 2015 also marked the close of our $2.8 million dollar capital campaign for Phase I of the Urban Grow Center. What began with leadership gifts from SEFCU, campaign co-chairs E. Stewart Jones Jr. and Kimberly Sanger Jones, the Massry Family Foundation, MVP Healthcare, First Niagara Bank, and the McCarthy Charities closed with an extremely generous donation in December 2015 from Callanan Industries, whose donation of three properties, including our former headquarters at 40 River Street, provided the last funds needed to reach our goal. None of the accomplishments of 2015 would have happened without the steadfast support of Capital Roots’ committed Board of Directors, hard-working staff, donors new and longstanding, and dedicated volunteers.
2015 AT A GLANCE

Healthy Stores 16

65

57,000 residents served by the Veggie Mobile®

350 students in the Taste Good Series

Produce Project students 27

411,000 pounds of produce distributed through the Food Hub

Urban Grow Center 1

Community Gardens 50

Community garden plots 882

Community garden plots 882

80,000 pounds of produce donated through Squash Hunger

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Dear Friends,

In the beginning of 2015, I confessed to a fellow staff member that sometimes, when walking into the Urban Grow Center to start my day, I had to pinch myself just to make sure it was real. After 10 years of planning, fundraising, construction – and more fundraising – Capital Roots had finally created the space that would allow our programs to grow to their fullest capacity. And did they ever!

Support from donors, farmers, sponsors, and a dedicated corps of volunteers allowed our Squash Hunger program to rescue and deliver more than 80,000 pounds of produce to food pantries, shelters, and soup kitchens. When we gleaned 10,000+ pounds of apples from Saratoga Apple, they were easily stored in one of our new walk-in coolers – to be distributed to emergency feeding programs in Albany, Rensselaer, Schenectady and Saratoga counties.

When we look at the impressive stats for Capital Roots’ food access programs in 2015, we look first to our Capital Campaign donors, whose generosity allowed this growth to occur. Sales from our 16 Healthy Stores grew 66% in 2015, with more than 43 different kinds of items sold, thanks to our store owner partners, who order culturally appropriate fruits and vegetables for their patrons. This figure includes Capital Roots’ on-site Produce Market, which has found a loyal customer base among our neighbors in North Central Troy. Our Virtual Veggie Mobile delivered 75,000 pounds of wholesale priced produce to childcare centers, Head Start programs, and food pantries, allowing 80 organizations that serve low-income families to double the amount of produce they served to their clients. Roughly 49% of the produce Capital Roots sold in 2015 was purchased year-round from local producers – an increase of 20% from 2014. Buying from local producers helps support our regional farm economy and reduces the environmental impact of our food purchases.

Our new location right off 787/Route 7 and on a central bus route allows community gardeners to easily access the free seeds, seedlings, and educational classes we offer them. In 2015 we marked the opening of our 49th and 50th community gardens – in East Greenbush and on Ida Street in South Troy.

As I look back on the growth that characterized 2015 – and continues into 2016 – the Urban Grow Center no longer feels like an unbelievable dream. It is a realized dream – thanks to our generous donors and the incredible dedication of our staff and board – all of whom contributed to this project. If you have not yet seen the Center in action, I hope you’ll stop by for a tour soon, to see what we have already accomplished – and to participate as we begin to envision the impact that Phase II of the Urban Grow Center will have.

With gratitude,

[Signature]
Board of Directors
Kim Hickok, President
John Carl, Executive Vice-President
Raymond Smith, Vice-President
Cynthia Nixon, Treasurer
Jean Gerbini, Secretary
Ann Pau and Deborah Bennett, At-Large
Michael Whiteman, Immediate Past President

Staff Members
Amy Klein, Executive Director
Sharon Di Lorenzo, Program Manager
Will Malcolm, Food Access Program Manager
Matthew Schueler, Grow Center Planner
Jessica Trowbridge, Operations Manager
Elizabeth Boyer, Food Hub Coordinator
Audrey Bridge, Administrative Assistant
Liz Burrichter, Squash Hunger/Outhouse Coordinator
Julia Cosgrove, Produce Project Farm Manager
Katie Doyle, Educator
Brooklyn Esposito, Volunteer Coordinator
Brent Irving, Healthy Communities Coordinator
Peter Jenkins, Produce Project Coordinator

Volunteer Devotees
Priscilla Fairbank
Olivia Fuller
Carolyn George
Eugiene Gleason
Peta Hahn
Emma Hestor
Alane Hohenberg
Chris Howard
Jane Husson
Rob Kietlinski
Audrey Koester
Krysia Kornicki
Kimberly Kuster-Smith
Anthony Lambrecht
Eileen Lang
Karen Lorch
Ronda Lyons
Mary Helena Mann
Beth Manning
Pauline Kamen Miller

Alex Monticello
Sonya Mulvihill
Anne Nardacci
Christine Nealon
Rachel O’Reilly
Jason Packer
Hillary Papineau
Bob Parsons
Ralph F. Passonno Jr.
Linda Passarette
Susan Poisson-Dollar
Melanie Pota
Mimsy Pye
Dave Rhodes
Diane Rivers
Nancy Ross
Lisa Roth
Mark Rubenstein
James Russell
Kay Schlebach
Priscilla Richardson
Raymond Rogers-Harrington
Katherine and Hugh Roome
Dorcus and Kenneth Rose
Karen Lipson and Alan Goldberg
Meika Lo and Matt Alinger
Thomas Mackey
Sara McCain
Abby Schumacher-Benoit, Events Coordinator
Any Scott, Bookkeeper
Mari Shopsin, Development Coordinator
Joel Stewart, Delivery Specialist
Emmett Stoffel, Mobile Market Assistant
James Surano, Mobile Market Assistant
Conor Valle, Mobile Market Assistant
Kelsey Whalen, Mobile Market Coordinator
Rebecca Whalen, Communications and Development Manager

David DaVoe
Barbara Lawrence
Dean and Liz Leith
Megan Leitzinger
John and Peggy Leon
Susanna and Michael Lia
Gary Lind and Ellen Kelly-Lind
Thomas and Sandra Linendoll
Donald Lipkin and Mary Bowen
Karen Lipson and Alan Goldberg
Meika Lo and Matt Alinger
Lindsey Van der Smaalen
Megan Weitzel
Edward and Ellen Flink
Schenectady Foundation
Saratoga Casino and Raceway
Review Foundation
Perry Smith and RoseAnne Fogarty
Mary Ann and Bruce Shubert
Chet and Karen Opalka
Joseph A. La Spisa
Candace King Weir
Drs. William and Mary Kahl
Elizabeth and Wayne Willson
Wendy and Gary Toth
Daniel and Sally Nolan
Cynthia Nixon
George Hearst III
Edward and Kathy Spain
Wendy Pattison and Bill Schroeder
Jane Payne and Janice Stock
Richard Peck and Vincent Gallierani
Laura and Ken Perrault
Michelle Phillips
Debra Pigliavento and Don Edmans
Kathryn and Joseph Pengliski
Elizabeth Pohlmann and Harald Moore
Dr. Richard Propp
Harry and Elisa Prout
Barbara and Peter Pryor
Anne Putnam
Lisa Queeny
Lori and Don Quigley
Judith Ratner
Patricia Raup
Sandra Ray
James and Risa Reed
Patricia Raum
Sharon Bedford and Fred Alm
Saratoga Casino and Raceway
Review Foundation
Perry Smith and RoseAnne Fogarty