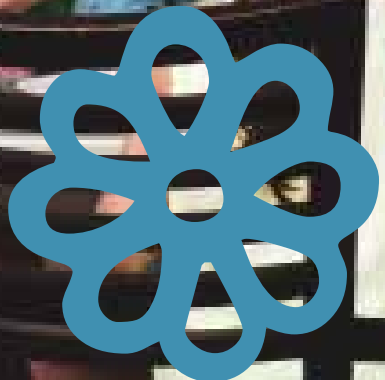




GROWING  chefs!

*THE*  
*Annual Report*

2017-2018



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## Our Mission

To get kids excited about wholesome, healthy food!

## Our Vision

To build and maintain a healthy, empowered community that is engaged with our food system

## Our Goals

To provide an avenue for Chefs and growers to get more involved in the community and to support food education

To provide children with the confidence, knowledge and enthusiasm to grow and prepare good, healthy cuisine

To support and encourage the development and growth of food education for children and families

## Our Core Values

### Community

To engage, strengthen and support communities in their ongoing conversations around food

### Food

To celebrate the positive change that we can create through food

### Health

To foster healthy bodies and minds through positive relationships with food

### Photos by:

Phoebe Say, Maddy Say  
and Jonathon Linton

**Design by:** Gabe Ramos

In the last decade of program delivery, Growing Chefs! has seen the impacts of food and food education first-hand. Cooking develops and encourages many important skills in areas of math, science, history, geography, literacy, art and more.

Understanding how and where food grows, how food interacts with our senses, the history of different foods and techniques, the names that we give to food, and how food relates to our own lifestyles and cultures are all important to child development.

Letter from our

# Board Chair and Executive Director

Ten Years!!

It was never meant to go this far – yet here we are!

In April 2008 the Growing Chefs! program was first adapted for two London classrooms (60 children) and Chefs Andrew Wolwowitz and Jason Shubert first explained the “proper” ratio of oil and acid in a vinaigrette to a grade 3 class. Now, a decade later, over 20,000 people in London and surrounding area have interacted with Growing Chefs! Ontario programming. It is staggering. Exciting. Amazing.

This past year has been a whirlwind of new challenges and opportunities. With every single one, the Growing Chefs! team and the amazing London community have come together and risen to the occasion. Whether designing incredible new programs (HQ Field Trips, Agri-Education Week at The Western Fair District, Know Your Roots Summer Camp) or improving our existing programs, this is the year that the Growing Chefs! family truly carried this organization to the next level.

Our achievements from this the past year belong to the amazing Growing Chefs! team of dedicated staff. We repeatedly witnessed them challenge themselves and push the limits of what this organization is capable of! Jen, Becca, Katherine, the Chris', Ryan, Sheri, the Phoebe's, Maddy, Lena, Jenn, Shar, Stephen, Leah, Marianne, Marisa, Noelle, Jonathon and Jay – THANK YOU!

You inspire us more than you know! It has been truly exciting to watch your work unfold as you have actualized ideas that we never dreamed possible. We are so eager to see what you have in store for the coming years!

Of course, none of the work Growing Chefs! does would be remotely possible without the thousands of volunteers, community partners, funders, friends and guests whom have come to our events and fundraisers over the years. To everyone who has helped in some way to get us to this point, we say thank you.

As we look ahead to next year, we are excited to have a new Strategic Plan in place to help guide us to achieving the ultimate goal of self-sustaining operations. We hope to see you and celebrate together at our 10th birthday party this fall, or at another event along the way. Happy eating everyone!

*- Spencer and Andrew*



Spencer Sandor

President &  
Board Chair



Andrew Fleet

Executive Director  
& Co-Founder

# THE School Project

*In School*



PARTNERS IN FOOD & AGRICULTURAL EDUCATION

*Agri-Education Week*

*Fresh Food Frenzy!*

*Family Activity Night*

*HQ Field Trips*

**5000+**



students  
participated in  
the 2017-18  
School Project

The School Project encompasses **5** program streams





*In School*

**2200+**  students from 6 schools participated this past year!



The Growing Chefs! team delivers programming to the entire school, grades K-8, visiting each class twice during the school year.

“ My students have been extremely excited about food and food prep since you came to our classes. Our library had one copy of a children's recipe book; they now do a weekly draw to see who will bring it home. They've tried to make up their own recipes, explored fractions through recipes and talked incessantly about getting their own cookbook from you soon. THANK YOU for bringing this program to our school. ”

Grade 1 Teacher  
St. Anthony's Catholic School





Growing Chefs! Ontario invites individual grade 1-3 classes on a field trip to visit the Covent Garden Farmers' Market. Students explore the market, connect with local farmers, purchase ingredients, then make and share a delicious three course lunch in the Market Kitchen.

350+ 

students made personal connections to food producers at the Covent Garden Farmers' Market.





# Family Activity Night

Family Activity Nights are school community events that include several different age-appropriate activities where students, their parents and their friends prepare a feast the entire group (100-150 people) shares!


**800+**  
people

**6**  
Family Activity Nights






## HQ Field Trips



Students visit HQ, take part in grade-appropriate interactive cooking activities and witness the entire food system in action, from production to consumption and beyond! The field trip culminates with the students sharing a meal they have had a hand in preparing.



**1500+** students engaged in the food system through interactive programming at HQ

## Feedback from classroom teachers:



“ The entire experience was well designed and executed and provided an extremely valuable and memorable learning experience for our students. Experiential learning experiences such as the one you provide are engaging and bring the learning to life. So much better than textbook learning!

”

“ Every student in our class said they tried at least one food item they had never eaten before!

”

“ The themes of sustainability, and reduced environmental impact fit well with our Geography studies. Ideas about freshness and quality of local foods tied in well to our unit on nutrition.


”

“ So many small moments! Students getting to be hands-on in the kitchen working together and knowing where the food came from was magical! And icing on the cake was to get to enjoy the meal all together in the end! I want to come with a class every single year!

”

Parent volunteers agree with teachers -  
“Best field trip ever!”





Piloted project this year to host students from grades 6-8 at the Western Fair Agri-Plex to get up close and personal with the food system and truly learn about farm to fork!



## *Feedback from students:*

---

*"* Learning about egg farms and dairy farms was fascinating... my favourite part was seeing the chickens and cows right in front of me. I have never seen one in real life before. *"*

- Student, Grade 7

*"* It was really cool how interactive the field trip was and being able to pet the animals. *"*

- Student, Grade 6

*"* Thank you so much for the opportunity to learn about cooking, chickens and cows. The food we made was soooooo good! *"*

- Student, Grade 6



## *Western Fair District Agri-Education Week*

Title Sponsor

The 2017/18  
School Food  
Education Project  
is presented by:



Tier 1



Westminster College Foundation



TD Friends of the  
Environment  
Foundation

**Great-West Life**  
ASSURANCE Great-West Life COMPANY



Tier 2

*Shelley  
Baker*

*the  
Clark  
Family  
Foundation*

Verna  
Davis  
Foundation



Tier 3



Tier 4



**DOWNTOWN  
LONDON**

**HEEMAN'S**



**MCKENZIE LAKE**  
LAWYERS



Tier 5

- Shangrila Yoga
- IODE
- David's Bistro
- Friends of London Civic Garden Complex
- Anything Grows Seed Company
- Thorndale Agricultural Society
- Rotary Club of London
- A Cut Above Meats
- Urban Harvest Landscape
- Parkway Garden Centre
- The Pristine Olive Tasting Bar
- Monteith Brown Planning Consultants

Want to see your  
name or logo on this  
list as a partner in food  
education for 2018/19 too?  
Contact [andrew@  
growingchefsontario.ca](mailto:andrew@growingchefsontario.ca) to  
learn more about  
continuing or beginning  
a sponsorship.







## *Growing Communities*

We continued partnerships with dozens of community agencies and brought food education programming to children, families and community members across London and the surrounding area.



**2100+**


community members participated in Growing Communities programming last year!

## *Know Your Roots*

We held our inaugural summer camp program and provided 2 weeks of affordable, fun and educational activities. Happy campers all around!

**2000+**

Londoners attended community events where we provided healthy, affordable food options.



*Our Community-Based Programs*



# Volunteer Recognition



More than 75 active and engaged volunteers, invested over 400 hours in program delivery, hosting events, fundraising and being our Community Champions!

Thank you to our dedicated team of volunteers! You are priceless!



Without you we simply could not deliver programming on the scale that we do! Your diverse food knowledge inspires our lesson planning and encourages our program participants! We look to you to continue to provide us with your insights and feedback to help us continue to grow and improve.

Get involved!



We have an online application, which we then follow up with an orientation session and on-the-job training and mentorship with an experienced volunteer or staff member. Your unique skills and interests are in demand! All gardening, cooking, administrative, fundraising, hospitality and marketing gurus welcome!!!



Property of Growing  
Chefs of London  
Ontario.

THANK  
YOU

(Very much!)

Thank you for all of your help  
volunteering. I really liked  
preparing the food and learning  
about how it's made. My  
favourite part was plating.  
I'm excited to use all of the  
tactics of making whole  
dishes. I also learned that  
without the global food  
system we wouldn't have  
food like pineapples and  
oranges. I hope I get to  
go to the field trip again  
sometime. Thanks!

Thank You to everyone at growing  
chefs as you have created  
something that everyone can  
do and teaches people how you  
can make great food with different  
ingredients!!

My favourite part was eating the  
food and talking and seeing  
what everyone had made.

Thank You!!

Word From  
THE Kitchen



4. List three things that you learned today.

- It takes a lot of transporting to get the food to stores
- local food system/school
- Food can come from anywhere in the world

5. If you could change one thing about the trip, what would it be?

The bus ride because  
it felt so long because  
I wanted to get there  
so bad.

Thank  
You

Growing Chefs,

Thank you for an amazing day! It was a lot of fun, creative, and just an amazing experience. I would love to learn more. I also had a fun time making the delicious food with my friends, everything was so good. I am looking forward to making that food again at home, with you amazing and delicious food recipes. Thank you again for an amazing experience.

From, nassir

Dear, Growing Chefs Quarters

Thank You so much the opportunity to learn about Cooking, Dairy Chickens and Cows. The Food we made was SOOOO good. Probably the best meal I had this year. Thank you for taking your time and have fun with these crazy kids. I hope we get to have the same opportunity as this year. Thank you for The Caesar Salad Chicken Wrap. That was an Amazing meal. How do you guys come up with this stuff. Just writing this Letter is making me hungry. Thank you For Everything.

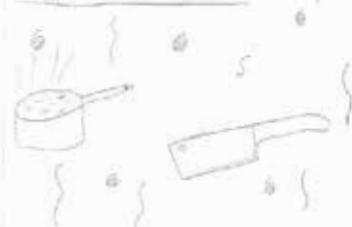
Sincerely, Jordan R. from Ms. Eccles Class

Thank you to all the  
Workers at Growing Chefs.  
I had such a fun  
time Cooking and learning  
about food (my personal  
favorite was plating.) The  
food was really good  
thank you for the  
wonderfull help you gave  
us to make it.

Sincerely,  
madely

THANK  
YOU!

Growing chefs!!



# The Beet Café



When the Beet Café first started, we were serving 140 meals out of a residential sized kitchen with two home ovens. Now, just four years later we have a commercial facility and supply up to 350 meals each day (more than 27,000 last year!) to hungry students across London. All Beet Café lunches are made from scratch, using the freshest local and seasonal ingredients we can get our hands on.



Stephen O'Quinn, Chris St. Laurent, Chris Large

After the lunch service has ended each day, the Beet team continue to work in support of the Growing Chefs! Education Projects. The Beet Café is the foundation from which our educational programming runs. Although meals made in The Beet Café are only sold at cost, with no profit margin, they cover the operational cost of the kitchen itself. This allows our Education Programming to operate from a certified kitchen space without having to build the cost into their operations – thus helping our Education Projects to reach more people. Together Chefs Chris Large and Chris St. Laurent are the heartbeat of the Beet! We affectionately call them “The Chris’” and along with the rest of the Chef Team, they deliver (quite literally)!

## *The word from Chris Large:*

“ I have been working in the hospitality industry since I was 15, at a multitude of different restaurants from fast food and chain restaurants to large scale food providers. I have never felt more pleased with the quality and locality of the products and people I am serving. FUN FACT: I had never seen how brussel sprouts grew until coming on-board with Growing Chefs! Ontario. ”

## *The word from Chris St. Laurent:*

“ Cooking has always been an interest to me. I joined the industry at 17 working at a snack bar where I fell in love with the pace of the industry. At 18 I took part in a high school co-op program and started working in a busy restaurant, where I began to learn how to cook professionally. I then went to Fanshawe for Culinary Arts. I have worked in various places throughout my career, from family restaurants to hotels to bars. Growing Chefs! is unlike anything I've ever done and has captured my heart. ”



# Events at HQ

Since opening GCO HQ in January 2017, the space has evolved greatly.

We were unsure of exactly what the venue potential was at the time. We tested a variety of different events in the space during early days.

Our inaugural event was Valentine's dinner for approximately 35 people. With a fairly new staff team, multiple volunteers and our tremendous Chefs, it was the beginning of something amazing!

We have since hosted a multitude of companies and private events for birthday parties, anniversaries and retirement celebrations, corporate team building events, cooking classes, wedding ceremonies and receptions.

Over 3000 Londoners enjoyed events with us last year! Our space is truly versatile and unique - and the good news is being spread within the community!

All events held in our space are considered fundraisers and all monies raised circle back into our social enterprise to enable our education projects to thrive and grow exponentially.

Who leads all this activity? Jen Wyant, our Facility Director!

Jen came to us with over 30 years hospitality experience both locally and abroad. Under Jen's leadership, our event portfolio has fully bloomed.

With our community's continued support of our signature events and community programming, we are on the path to becoming self-sustaining.



From left: Sheri Templeton - Donor Relations, Jen Wyant - Facility Director (and Superhero), Andrew Fleet, Executive Director

2017-18

## *Fiscal Year*

### **Income**

School Project	\$189,747
Growing Communities	\$64,785
Administration	\$22,875
The Beet	\$273,689
HQ Events	\$233,452
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$784,548</b>

### **Expense**

School Project	\$177,885
Growing Communities	\$71,027
Administration	\$40,671
Social Enterprise (The Beet / HQ Events)	\$458,817
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$748,399</b>

## *How you can help*

Over the past ten years Growing Chefs! has grown from a seed (or) pilot project in one school into this beautiful, blooming living thing, that needs care and tending to.

We continue to depend on the financial support of grants and subsidies to sustain our operation. Our goal over the next two years is to further develop diverse and stable funding relationships that meet the changing needs of the organization, while growing our capacity to deliver affordable programming to our community.

But we can't reach those goals without the support of our community – Growers, Producers, Chefs, Educators, Business Owners, Parents, Children, Youth and YOU.

Please consider supporting our efforts!

Contact:  
Sheri Templeton  
Facility Administration/Donor Relations  
[sheri@growingchefsontario.ca](mailto:sheri@growingchefsontario.ca)

Sheri would love to connect with you personally to talk about how your investment in Growing Chefs! Ontario will help to strengthen our community.



Montessori Academy of London's relationship with Growing Chefs! Ontario dates back to the beginning when in 2008 Growing Chefs! piloted some of its earliest educational programs with the school's elementary students.

Growing Chefs! found a highly compatible partner in Montessori Academy, as both organizations believe very strongly in the idea of preparing children for life with practical skills and education that will help them make healthy food choices.

What started as field trips to the test kitchen to get students "excited about wholesome, healthy food," has turned into a strong partnership that sees more than 250 of the school's students enjoying hot lunch provided by The Beet Café Chefs; the lunch program is provided daily in Toddler and Casa (preschool) and twice a week in Elementary. In the summer, the school's Camp Discovery day camp participants also enjoy a daily lunch provided by The Beet Café.

Tina Sartori, Montessori Academy's Executive Director says, "One of the things we love about working so closely with Growing Chefs!, both in our lunch programs and as education provider, is that they enhance our existing nutrition and food-related programs." She adds, "Working with Growing Chefs! complements what we teach our students in elementary about the interdependence of human needs in society and really shines a light on how food doesn't just appear at the grocery store. The children are able to see the food that is produced in the area and gain a greater appreciation for the people who produce that food and how it impacts the services in our community. They learn about nutrition and good food choices at a young age in our Casa program - which they then take into our student-led Junior High lunch program and throughout their lives. This is all strengthened by our partnership and values shared with Growing Chefs."

#### About Montessori Academy of London

Montessori Academy of London is a registered charity committed to providing families in the London area education choice; it is the area's only accredited Montessori program, offering authentic Montessori education to children ages 18 months through 14 years.

## Partner Profiles



Originally incorporated in 1957, Westminster College provided a residential experience within a supportive Christian environment for students at Western University. After providing a 'home away from home' for over 40 years at the corner of Richmond Street and Windermere Road in London, Ontario, the property was sold to Western University in 2005.

Westminster College received Foundation status in 2007 and now provides grants to registered charitable organizations under the business name of Westminster College Foundation (WCF). The Foundation favours initiatives that help advance and assist in the areas of education, health and/or spiritual care, focusing primarily on youth and/or seniors. The Foundation is self-sufficient and does not actively seek financial donations or funding. Since inception as a Foundation, over \$4M has been provided to registered Canadian charities.

The Foundation began partnering with Growing Chefs! for the 2014-15 school year and helped us grow our In-School Program from reaching approximately 850 students to over 2000 students last year.

Over the past three years they have continued to support Growing Chefs! School Programming as it has evolved, now including In-School activities, Field Trip opportunities for JK to Grade 8 classes and Family Activity Nights which together give nearly 4000 students and their families opportunities to cook healthy food with our Chef team each year.







*Our  
Team*

# *The Board*

## **Board of Directors**

- Spencer Sandor - President/Board Chair
- Jordan Hypes - Treasurer
- Elsa Rose Eastabrook - Co-Founder/Signing Officer
- Andrew Wolwowicz
- Malcolm Scott
- Nicola Noble
- Matt Pawelec
- Cecile Klerks
- Kayley MacGregor - Young Leaders Placement

## **Officers:**

- Lena Gahwi - Secretary

## **Board members (who have left us this past year)**

- Katie Van Den Berg
- Stephanie Ayers
- Jim Hunking
- Morgan Liberatorio
- Perry Esler



### Education Team:

- Becca Minielly - Projects Coordinator/Volunteer Coordinator
- Sharlaine Murga - Education Assistant
- Lena Gahwi - Education Assistant
- Jennifer Boswick - Education Assistant
- Maddy Say - Social Media Manager/Education Assistant

### Chef Team:

- Katherine Jones - Executive Chef
- Ryan Wishak – Lead Chef
- Chris Large - Sous Chef
- Chris St. Laurent - First Cook
- Stephen O'Quinn - Chef Apprentice
- Leah Mulat - Education Program Chef

### HQ Team:

- Andrew Fleet - Executive Director
- Jen Wyant - Facility Director
- Sheri Templeton - Facility Administrator/Donor Relations

### Staff who have moved on to other exciting adventures...

- Noelle Coughlin – Projects Coordinator
- Phoebe Say – Chef Apprentice/Education Assistant/Social Media Manager/Photographer/Resident Artist
- Marisa Verbeem - Education Projects Chef
- Marianne Griffith - Event Coordinator/Education Assistant
- Jonathon Linton - Chef Apprentice
- Phoebe Fraund - Event Coordinator/Education Assistant
- Jay MacIntyre - Deliveries/Facility Maintenance



*The Staff*

*Our  
Team*



# Community Supporters AND Partners

A Cut Above Meats  
Agape Foundation  
Altaqwa Academy  
Anago  
Anderson Craft Ales  
Anything Grows Seed Company  
Arcane  
Arva Flour Mill and Store  
Aviva Canada  
Blyth Academy  
Booch Organic Kombucha  
Cambia Development Foundation  
Camp Shine  
Canadian School of Natural Nutrition, London Branch  
CHAMP Families  
Charles & Carolyn Innis  
Charles & Jill Wright  
Chef Andrew Wolwicz, Craft Pharmacy / North Moore Catering  
Chef Anthony Abdullah, Potojo Food and Catering  
Chef Chad Stewart, Field to Fork Catering  
Chef Shauna Versloot, Live Well Community  
Chef Thompson Tran, Wooden Boat Food Company  
Chef Tim Drew  
Child and Youth Network (CYN)  
Childreach  
C-K Table / Heritage Grain Collaboration  
Colborne Street United Church Outreach  
Community Mortgage Movement  
Craigwood Youth Services  
Crouch Neighbourhood Resource Centre  
Crunican Orchards  
David's Bistro  
Downtown London  
East London United Church Outreach  
Eco-Logic Nursery  
Ecosource  
Eden Garden Works  
Fanshawe College  
Forest City Beer Fest  
Forest City Road Races  
Fraser Teeple  
French Public School Board Viamonde (CONSEIL)

Friends of the London Civic Garden Complex  
Frisa Farms  
Gabor Sass - The Smart and Caring Community Fund  
Gibbons Park Montessori School  
Girls Rock! Camp  
Gordon Food Service (GFS)  
Great-West Life - London Life - Canada Life  
Green Party of Ontario  
Grickle Grass Festival  
Heeman's  
Human Environments Analysis Laboratory (HEAL), Department of Geography, Western University  
Hybrid Fitness  
Imperial Order of Daughters of the Empire  
Investing in Children  
Ivey Business School  
Jill Wilcox Foundation  
Jill's Table  
Joyce Farms  
Julia Hunter Memorial Fund  
Kiwans Club of Forest City-London  
Libro Credit Union  
Locomotive Espresso  
London Brewing Cooperative  
London Catholic District School Board  
London Chamber of Commerce  
London Children's Connection  
London Children's Museum  
London Clay Arts Centre / London Potter's Guild  
London Community Foundation  
London District Christian School Board  
London Environmental Network  
London Food Incubator  
London Home Economics Association  
London Intercommunity Health Centre  
London Middlesex Master Gardeners  
London Training Centre  
London Urban Services Organization (LUSO)  
London Waldorf School  
Maria Luisa de Moreno International Foundation, Canada  
McKenzie Lake LLP  
Meals on Wheels London  
Merrymount Children's Centre  
Middlesex Federation of Agriculture  
Middlesex London Health Unit  
Miller & Co  
Monteith Brown Planning Consultants  
Montessori Academy of London  
Northern Divine Aquafarms  
Ocean Wise  
Ontario Trillium Foundation  
Parkway Garden Centre  
Patrick's Beans

Paul Kash, Sales Representative, NuVista Realty  
Pillar Nonprofit Network  
Reforest London  
Richard and Shelley Baker  
Rotary Club of London  
Royal Agriculture Fair  
Shangrila Yoga  
Slegers Greenhouses  
South London Neighbourhood Resource Centre  
Storybook Gardens  
TD Friends of the Environment Foundation  
Thames Talbot Land Trust  
Thames Valley District School Board  
The Arroyas Family  
The City of London  
The Clark Family Foundation  
The Covent Garden Farmer's Market  
The Covent Garden Market  
The Dekay Family  
The Hungary Butcher  
The Ilderton Agricultural Society  
The MacDonald Pierce Foundation  
The Pristine Olive Tasting Bar  
The Sisters of St. Joseph in Canada  
The Verna D. Davis Community Fund  
Thorndale Agricultural Society  
Thorndale Optimists  
Top Shelf Distilleries  
Tourism London  
Trojan Technologies  
UnLondon Digital Media  
Urban Harvest Landscape  
Walter J. Blackburn Foundation  
Western Fair District  
Western Fair Farmers' and Artisans' Market  
Westminster College Foundation  
YMCA of Southwestern Ontario  
Youth Opportunities Unlimited  
Zdyb Centre for Health Promotion

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Thank you   
FROM all of us at  
Growing Chefs!  
Ontario





*Help us grow!*



Consider supporting us in our efforts!  
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or email us at  
[info@growingchefsontario.ca](mailto:info@growingchefsontario.ca)

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[www.growingchefsontario.ca](http://www.growingchefsontario.ca)

Growing Chefs! Ontario is a registered charity  
Charitable # 85895 9026 RR0001