



Contact: Chonnie Richey, Founder, Independence Gardens
cell (214) 500-7206
chonnie@independencegardens.org

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Come and EAT IT! Chef-Led Nutrition Education Program Comes to Arizona

CHANDLER – May 1, 2021 – Take 100+ students, mix in two chefs passionate about fresh food, and a whole lot of fruits and vegetables - and what you get is a recipe for a fun, hands-on nutrition cooking program. On May 20, 2021, Independence Gardens (IG), in collaboration with Aramark and Frontier Urban Farm are bringing together a team of chefs to the Chandler Unified School District to deliver, Come and EAT IT!, an interactive and impactful nutrition education program.

“The mission of Independence Gardens is to provide children engaging, impactful nutrition education programs by connecting them to the food they are growing and eating.” said Chonnie Richey, Founder of Independence Gardens. “Every student whose school participates in our network have an opportunity to learn where their food comes from, through our outdoor edible learning program, and they also learn how to cook what they’re growing through our chef-driven live cooking program, Come and EAT IT!” Independence Gardens (IG), is a 501c3 nonprofit parent-led organization, who funds experiential nutrition programs starting with their edible outdoor learning spaces.

Hydroponic Vertical Gardens is the newest IG program that launched in 2020 and will be offered in conjunction with a school nutrition program. The 15,000 square feet outdoor learning space planned for Rice Elementary in Chandler, Arizona will house these vertical gardens in their planned green house. Frontier Urban Farm is proud to partner with local schools and health organizations, including Independence Gardens, to provide vertical gardens for the classroom as a way to promote learning, nutrition, sustainability, and a sense of community. (frontierurbanfarm.com) Frontier Urban Farm offers the community convenient access to fresh produce through easy, sustainable vertical gardens that grow year-round. The soul of our business is growing fresh produce without chemicals at any location, working together to support our local community, and contributing to the global food supply while reducing our carbon footprint on Earth.



Aramark, through their food service management partnership with Chandler Unified School, is excited to bring this program to Rice Elementary. “We’re thrilled to host this program in collaboration with Independence Gardens and Frontier Urban Farms. We want to provide the students a connection between the produce they’re growing in their vertical gardens and what they see in their on-site cafe,” says Jenny Bracamonte, Food & Nutrition Director for CUSD. Aramark hopes to expand similar nutrition education to all the elementary sites in the Chandler Unified School District next school year.

Come and Eat IT! 2021, launching on May 20, 2021 at 9:00 -10:00 a.m., will showcase a dish reflective of the nutrition goals of Independence Gardens. The recipe, for this hands-on cooking program, was developed by Aramark chefs and will use ingredients that is grown or will be grown by students within the Independence Gardens network of schools.

Chef Tess Collins, Aramark Executive Chef, and Chef Subash Yadav, Chef/Owner, Sherpa Kitchen, Gilbert, AZ will lead the cooking program with over 100 Rice Elementary students as their sous chefs.

“ I’m thrilled to have the opportunity to work with these organizations to really help the kids make the connection from farm to fork,” says Subash Yadav

“Independence Gardens’ is very excited about how we are continually finding innovative ways to connect children to food,” said Chonnie Richey, Founder of Independence Gardens. “When we partner with school districts like Chandler Unified and collaborate with organizations, like Aramark’s K-12 Program, we start seeing the impact our programs have on nourishing the lives of every child in our community.”



About Independence Gardens: Independence Gardens is a 501c3, parent-led organization whose mission is to connect kids with food through actionable, impactful school nutrition programs. We are committed to partnering with schools in developing and implementing experiential edible gardening programs that will provide every student an engaging, meaningful and transformative educational experience. This uninhibited learning will be accomplished through working partnerships with our community and schools, aiding in implementation of curriculum that address sustainable and ecological gardening practices, and provide an avenue for students to develop life skills in areas such as nutrition, leadership, and decision making. www.independencegardens.org

Follow us:

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/Independence-Gardens-156393337870855/>

Instagram: @igardensrev

Twitter: @iesgardens

website: www.independencegardens.org

Hashtags: #independencegardens #come&eatit #igardens #schoolnutrition #nutritioneducation #comeandeatit

About Aramark: Aramark is a global food service management company who specializes in curating specialized solutions for its partners. Their primary focus is promoting student success through freshly made meals and nutrition education.

Facebook: www.facebook.com/aramark

Twitter: @aramark

Website: www.aramark.com

