

Meadowood Community Health Partners is Growing – Literally!

By Sheray Wallace

On the hottest Memorial Day weekend on record in Madison, two community members helped me make my dream of growing my own garden a reality!

Jill Lundberg and Michelle Heitzinger met with me a few weeks ago to talk about the work of my Health Office and what they could do.

When they asked what would help in my efforts to promote healthy lifestyles, the idea of growing vegetables in the Meadowood Community Garden was on my mind.

They loved the idea and off we went to make it happen!

I have wanted a garden for a few years, but having NO experience in gardening, I knew I had to ask for help.

It appeared in these two ladies who pushed me to apply for the plot permit, took me to buy the plants, seeds, wire fencing and other accessories needed to get my garden growing!

Then with the help and tutoring of Acelynn (Sp) of the Meadowood Community Garden, I was using a roto-tiller for the first time in my life, and turning over the dirt to make my planting soil!

Next we prepped the perimeter, staked out the plot and added the wire fencing, again, all new adventures for me!

The following day, we planted, tomatoes, 2 kinds of peppers, 3 varieties of greens, cabbage, spinach, beans and watermelon. I can't tell you how much fun it was to work together as a team, with sweat running down our arms, backs and legs, mixed with the dirt and dust of the garden. When everything was all planted and watered, Jill asked me to say a prayer to bless our garden, as we had a group hug for added good luck! We were all exhausted, emotional, and yet so joyful when this phase was completed!

My ultimate goal of this project is to bring in the veggies for my clients to learn about and take home and cook with. I want to share the importance and self-satisfaction of growing their own food like I am, and at harvest time, cook a community supper for everyone!

I will keep you updated and hopefully inspire others to give this a try, especially our neighborhood children!

Here are pictures of our first phase- the prep and planting!



Jill Lundberg is an active community philanthropist and volunteer. She is a former President of the Board of Directors of Planned Parenthood Wisconsin and continues to work to empower and support women in our community and beyond. She and her husband Pete have honed their gardening skills and share in the community including the Agrace HospiceCare gardens.

Michelle Heitzinger works at the Urban League of Greater Madison as the Executive Assistant to the President and CEO. She was the former Executive Director of Susan G. Komen South Central Wisconsin. Michelle is a member of Women In Focus, and along with her husband Don and daughter Zoe, volunteer and support many community organizations.