

## ***Insight from the Roots Community Garden***

*This month's Moment of the Month is not as much a moment but a reframe. It's mid-summer at Roots Community Garden. The garden is an analogy for what the world is going through this summer. There are weeds everywhere - taller, wider, stronger than the plants. The weeds began as a source of frustration as we blamed them on the COVID-19 restrictions that limited the hands that could work in the plots. We felt overwhelmed when we realized the problem isn't going away. We tried to stop them, we tried to fight them, but have recently entered a period of acceptance because at this midway point, the plants are growing anyway.*

We learn that the weeds are interfering with our sense of control and they teach us to let go and focus on what is growing in this space, and not what isn't. So we look to the garden to see what else it can teach us about navigating hard times. We learn from the sunflowers to always look for the light, and when we've soaked up enough, to become the sun ourselves. We learn from the cucumbers that lifting someone up can change their entire trajectory of growth. We learn from the tomatoes that when the things we carry are too heavy, we benefit from something to lean on. We learn from transplanting that some things need a fresh start to thrive. We learn from seeds to not see the what-is but the what-will-be. We learn every leaf, stalk, and root contributes something. Certainly, if we can find this much virtue in plants, we can surely see the same in ourselves and others.



Catching butterflies at the garden on Hicks Road in Palatine.





*Tally Millin*  
Roots Garden Coordinator

The fact of the matter is that the world as we know it is covered in weeds and the hands that typically surround us are 6 ft away. It's stressful and, at times, unrecognizable. The garden teaches us that the things that feel like burdens this summer are acts of empathy and compassion that cultivate the crops we deem worth fighting for. The garden reminds us to look in your own life and see the things that are growing amidst the weeds of Summer 2020.

A HUGE thank you to everyone who has supported us through donations, ideas, well-wishes, hello honks on Hicks Road, and the hours of tireless labor that has gotten us to this point. Stay cool, stay rooted, and visit us at the garden to see what we're harvesting this July. We have kale, chile peppers, tomatoes, tomatillos, cilantro, basil, parsley, and of course- lots and lots of (nutritious, useful, perfect-as-they-are) weeds!

**Tally Millin, Roots Garden Coordinator**

Roots Community Garden is a collaborative effort among community agencies, local government, schools, businesses, and churches and community volunteers, including POC clients. The garden provides food for the under served in Palatine as well as educational opportunities and hands-on activities. Last year Roots provided 401 pounds of produce with 360 volunteer hours counted. Local elementary schools bus students to the garden to help us with weeding, planning and preparing the soil. This truly is an exceptional experience for the entire community!



*To learn more about POC's community and how you can help children and families, go to [www.poc.news](http://www.poc.news).*

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