

The Pablo David Memorial Sunflower Planting

“It takes a village to raise a child” - So what are we doing to our youth; when much of the daily conversation about them is filled with negative criticism? How can we show them how precious they are to us and how much we really need them to succeed?...

Plant and display sunflowers!!!

Harlem wide invitation for individuals, families and community organizations to join in celebrating the beautiful spirit of

PABLO DAVID

a municipal housing resident, videographer, peacekeeper, college student and mentor to neighborhood youth

symbolizing and honoring:

YOUNG PEOPLE STRIVING FOR A BRIGHTER FUTURE
THE MENTORS AND ORGANIZATIONS DEVOTED TO

YOUTH
GENEROSITY
JUSTICE
BEAUTY
PEACE
COMMUNITY



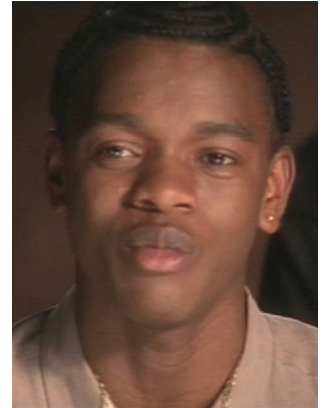


Sunflowers in Harlem

RATIONALE - The Sunflower; a native plant with positive ecological attributes, was chosen to be the living symbol of this memorial. These flowers were the favorite plant of the



memorial's namesake, Pablo David. We want to honor Pablo David's love of the Sunflower, and show our concern and pride in all our youth who are challenged daily by deceptions, deprivations, violence, and exploitation. Pablo helped



other neighborhood youth to revive a local community green space. An area teen himself, he turned his life around within the TRUCE (HCZ) mentoring program. On April 17, 2003

while home from college; he was killed in a car crash. A tragedy caused by another's at-risk behavior (reckless drunk driving). Pablo David brought joy and pride to his family, his teachers, his fellow students, and his community by turning his life towards a brighter future. We want to pay homage and remember him for that by saluting all inner city youth who also strive to build a brighter future.

PURPOSE - To develop a community based floral exhibition; honoring the spirit of young people who strive to succeed in life, by committing themselves to positive choices and sacrifices; and to encourage their acquisition of needed coping skills that can minimize their exposure and vulnerability to high risk behavior. The Sunflower displays what botanists call *heliotropism*. In short; the plant turns its' flower face towards the sun to capture the light. So, for our purposes, Sunflowers, when planted throughout the community, will represent the children turning away from the unhealthy aspects of urban life, the so called "concrete jungle", to face the challenges of building a better life for themselves. The sight of Sunflowers turning toward the Sun can well represent the promise, beauty, and value of young people striving for excellence in these trying times.

The annual Sunflower comes in a variety of sizes and colors, like our youth. They provide good nutrition; being especially valuable as a source of heart healthy cooking oil. Sunflowers can supply renewable green building materials and bio-fuel, attract beneficial pollinators and provide an attractive natural enhancement to the urban landscape. They have potential, as our young people do.



METHODOLOGY - Starting along the West wall of the Carrie McCracken TRUCE Garden; located on St. Nicholas Avenue between 117th and 118th Streets; a wide patch will again be planted with giant Sunflowers and other compatible plants. The pathway leading back to the entry gate will also be lined with small 2x2 or 5 gallon buckets, safe planters for neighborhood toddlers; with their parents to plant smaller Sunflowers and companion plants. Sunflowers will also be planted parallel to the St. Nicholas Avenue fence. We will then seek additional sympathetic plantings at other community gardens; youth service sites, churches, businesses, and

homes. Because these plants are easy to grow, anyone can participate in their dissemination throughout the community.

At the conclusion of the growing season sunflowers will be harvested and selected seeds used for roasting, oil pressing, and future planting. Stalks will be trimmed and dried for staves and fencing in our gardens while the balance of the plant material will



The resources needed to implement this project are accessible, affordable, and renewable towards a readily sustainable effort. All these facts put participation within the reach of all neighborhood stakeholders in the future of our youth. By providing a constant reminder of the concern of the community for their welfare and progress; we can provide positive reinforcement to our youth's achievements. Not communication based on rebuke or disgrace; which too often characterizes anonymous adult/youth interactions within our community.

This project will provide a tangible expression, that not only do we realize "it takes a village to raise a child", but also; the future of "our village" depends on the emergence of wisdom, creativity, and dignity from among our youth.

HOW TO HELP:

Interested parties are requested to identify possible dates and times of their availability; so that orientation, planning, and supply distribution meetings can be scheduled.

CMT Garden Steering Committee

P.O. Box 1486

New York, New York 10026

This project is a collaboration starting with the Carrie McCracken Truce Garden, T.R.U.C.E. (HCZ) and New Song Harlem Healthy Living Center. Please distribute to other potential collaborators.

For info: contact Steven (Steve) Kidd 347-557-2963.

To nourish children and raise them against odds is in any time, any place, more valuable than to fix bolts in cars or design nuclear weapons.

-Marilyn French-award winning writer and feminist

CARRIE McCracken TRUCE COMMUNITY GARDEN
143-145 ST NICHOLAS AVENUE @ 117TH ST
HARLEM, NEW YORK, NY 10027

