



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Jeffrey D. Klein

SENATOR KLEIN ANNOUNCES \$1.5M IN STATE FUNDING FOR THE NEW YORK BOTANICAL GARDEN EDIBLE ACADEMY

JEFFREY D. KLEIN | October 14, 2015

| ISSUE: **CONSTITUENTS CORNER, COMMUNITY REINVESTMENT, HEALTH, EDUCATION**



BRONX, NY - State Senator Jeff Klein (D-Bronx/Westchester), joined by Gregory Long, Chief Executive Officer and The William C. Steere Sr. President of The New York Botanical Garden (NYBG), announced Wednesday that he has secured a \$1.5 million state grant which will go toward the construction of a new Edible Academy campus at The NYBG aimed at addressing childhood obesity and teaching healthy eating habits to New York City students and their families. The announcement was made as dozens of P.S. 24 students visiting the Family

Garden were harvesting fall vegetables in anticipation of the first frost in coming weeks.

Senator Jeff Klein said: “By investing in our children’s health and wellness from an early age, we are providing a solid foundation for the future and improving health outcomes for generations of New Yorkers. Throughout my career, I have made combating childhood obesity and encouraging a healthy lifestyle a top priority – including advocating for funding for physical fitness programs and introducing legislation to improve access to fruits and vegetables in underserved communities. I’m proud to have secured \$1.5 million in state funding for the new, state-of-the-art Edible Academy and look forward to working with The New York Botanical Garden to provide students and their families with the tools they need to connect with nature, and lead long, healthy and happy lives.”

Gregory Long, Chief Executive Officer & The William C. Steere Sr. President of the New York Botanical Garden, said: “The New York Botanical Garden is proud to be a leader in garden-based education for teachers and children from The Bronx and throughout the New York metro region. To address childhood obesity and other health issues caused by poor nutrition, and with the help of funding secured by State Senator Jeffrey D. Klein, the Garden is expanding its edible gardening education to a larger-scale program, The Edible Academy. This state-of-art complex will allow the Garden to increase the number of people served annually by its edible educational programs from 50,000 to more than 100,000, and expand to year-round instruction. We thank all the funders of this project and deeply appreciate that New York State, through the leadership of Senator Jeff Klein, chose to invest in this important project that will improve lives and the health of Bronx schoolchildren and their families.”

The Edible Academy, a leading garden-based education platform, provides hands-on activities, and interactive programs that help children, their families, and their teachers learn more about growing and preparing vegetables, fruits, and herbs while helping them gain a

lifelong interest in gardening and healthy living.

The Edible Academy project will allow The NYBG to expand existing programs through the winter months by constructing a cutting-edge, environmentally friendly facility with ample classroom space. The new facility will offer year-round edible gardening programs and STEM (science, technology, engineering and math) activities related to cooking and growing.

The \$1.5 million state grant secured by Klein will help support City funds already allocated for the construction of the new facility – effectively doubling NYBG capacity and incorporating new opportunities for nutrition education and cooking activities to over 100,000 individuals a year.

The project will also include the construction of an innovative green roof, teaching greenhouse, 300-seat amphitheater, solar pavilion and sprawling meadow garden.

The NYBG is expected to break ground on The Edible Academy in the fall of 2016, with the facility's expected completion date slated for the spring of 2018 – just in time for planting season.