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18th Satellite Garden Opened at Temple Christian Preschool



Media Contact
Public Information Officer
Stephen Hale
951-943-6100
shale@cityofperris.org

PERRIS, Calif. (November 21, 2019) -- The City of Perris dedicated its 18th "satellite community garden" at Temple Christian Preschool, on Thursday, November 21, 2019 achieving another milestone in its efforts to bring healthy food choices and education to its residents.

In attendance for the garden ceremony were City of Perris Mayor Michael M. Vargas, Perris Council Member Malcolm Corona, Assistant City Manager Isabel Carlos, City of Perris Director of Community Services Sabrina Chavez, Interim Director of Administrative Services Saida Amozgar, Representative of the 31st District Senator Richard Roth Carina Tamayo, and Legislative Intern and Youth Advisory Coordinator to Supervisor Jeff Hewitt Miranda Lara.

After some introductory remarks by Temple Baptist Church Pastor Conner Smith, the Temple Christian Preschool students lead those in attendance in the pledge of allegiance, the pledge to the Christian flag and the pledge to the Bible.

Perris Mayor Michael M. Vargas then spoke briefly about the importance of youth involvement in gardening throughout the City of Perris.

"This is an ideal situation, as we now have gardens in high schools, middle schools, elementary schools and preschools," said Vargas. "We can now ensure that we are teaching our students the importance of going from seed to harvest and continue that message throughout their education. We want to engrain in them the importance of healthy eating and healthy living."



Perris Council Member Malcolm Corona also talked about the importance of establishing the gardens throughout the City.

"I am very happy for this garden and each of them help to beautify the city," said Corona. "But at the same time, these gardens teach educational to some of our most precious residents, our children."

After unveiling a community garden at the City Hall Campus, the Grow Perris initiative has passed the halfway point of their mission to establish 30 gardens throughout the City. Assistant City Manager Isabel Carlos also spoke at the event and shared how a simple garden at Perris City Hall turned into an initiative throughout the entire City.

"Grow Perris started with just one garden on the City Hall main campus," said Carlos. "That one project grew into an entire initiative to build these 30 gardens, which are a social prescription for good health, bringing good nutrition, increased activity and have mental health benefits."

The 18th satellite garden at the Temple Christian Preschool was named the Children's Heritage Garden and continues moving the City forward in the Grow Perris Initiative.



Currently, there are more than 30 partners in the Grow Perris initiative. The partners include health and education advocates from all over the region including Western Riverside Council of Governments (WRCOG), Kaiser Permanente, Eastern Municipal Water District, Department of Water Resources and the UC Master Gardener Program, Riverside University Health System as well as all three school districts in Perris and other local community organizations and leaders. Additionally, the G. Hurtado Construction Company partnered with the City of Perris to bring the Children's Heritage Garden to Temple Christian Preschool.

The garden champion and site manager for the Children's Heritage Garden at Temple Christian Preschool is Preschool Director Desiray Taylor. In March 2018, Perris City staff received word that Temple Christian Preschool was interested in a potential garden and began working with the school for implementation as part of the Grow Perris initiative.

Taylor, alongside Temple Baptist Church Pastor Conner Smith, worked to complete the 18th satellite garden. The City broke ground in August 2019 and worked with Mr. Douglas Cousins and the Future Farmers of America from Perris High School to finish construction on the garden race beds. With the help of G. Hurtado Construction Company and Perris City Staff, the Children's Heritage Garden was finished in November 2019.

In addition to the garden race beds, the garden contains rotating tower for fruits and vegetables such as peach trees, apple trees, butterfly bushes, lettuce, kale and cilantro. Tire beds were also installed for flowers and the garden features a drip irrigation for water conservation. The garden is also ADA compliant and features the first learning area for outdoor education.



Perris City Hall
101 N. D Street
Perris, CA 92570

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