

Phoenix Sustainability Initiative Garden Club at the UChicago Charter School Woodlawn

After receiving the green fund grant, our team began workshopping garden club logistics and start dates with our contacts at the UChicago Charter School, Travis Davis and Kate Carter. Ms. Carter is a science teacher with a background in gardening, and Mr. Davis is the school's after-school programs coordinator. After weeks of deliberating and workshopping ideas, we held an information session with two of our team members during the middle school lunch period on April 25, 2025 for UCW students. We talked to rising 6th and 7th grade students about the garden club, asking for recommendations and providing them with important dates. We then held a virtual information session for parents on Monday, April 28th, to spread the word about the garden club through the school's parent network. On Wednesday and Thursday of that same week, we went to Home Depot to procure 29 bags of soil, 3 garden beds, and an assortment of garden tools and vegetable seeds, totalling \$557.26. All of this was in preparation for the installation of garden beds, which also served as the first day of the garden club.

On May 2nd, 2025, we held the inaugural meeting of the UCW Garden Club, which included the installation of our garden beds and introduction of the club to its new members. Over ten middle-school students from UCW attended this first meeting, and with the help of our PSI volunteers successfully constructed and filled three garden beds with soil for the garden club to use indefinitely. Since then, our team has held weekly meetings with UCW students running through the end of the scholastic year, with 3-10 students attending every meeting.

Looking forward, we are currently working with UCW to coordinate summer garden maintenance between our team, UCW staff, and neighborhood families, and exploring the expansion of the garden club to high school students in the fall. We have lesson plans prepared for the fall, including plantings and tastings, and have enough of our budget left to acquire all of our materials for the fall and winter as they come. Pictured are scenes from the installation day.

