

Three reasons to be thankful . . .

It's the time of year for gratitude - especially for those who inspire us with their dedication to the well-being and success of Garfield Park and its residents. Please take a moment to learn more about three individuals who, without much fanfare, are making a difference in our community. Then consider a donation today to support their efforts and our collective work on behalf of a strong and vibrant Garfield Park.



Keeping Kedzie Safe and Clean

The next time you're traveling down Kedzie, take a moment to appreciate the work of **Edward Willis**. Eddie is a lifelong resident of the West Side, growing up in Garfield Park and attending Marshall High School. For the last two years, Eddie has worked for the GPCC to maintain the Kedzie business corridor, picking up garbage in front of businesses, weeding common areas and shoveling snow in the winter to make sure children and seniors can travel safely. An early riser, Eddie is often on the job at 6:30 a.m, three days a week. "I like doing what I'm doing," Eddie said. "I get a lot of feedback with people stopping their cars and saying thank you and keep up the good work."

Leadership for Young Adults

Community gardening is about a lot more than fresh vegetables and flowers. As **Montrel Daniels** knows, it can be about leadership, job experience, and community investment. Montrel has spent the last two summers working as a youth intern for the Garfield Park Garden Network. A graduate of Manley Career Prep, Montrel is currently working and attending Malcolm X College. Yet he is always available to continue lending a hand when needed both in the gardens and greenhouse, as well as the Neighborhood Market. As Montrel's supervisor Angela Taylor said, "Montrel is a great individual who holds a lot of leadership qualities for a person so young. He makes himself available and shows a lot of initiative." Over the last two years, Montrel has been a role model for his peers and an example of the importance of engaging young people in community renewal efforts that will impact their generation.



Honoring her family's history



Gina Jamieson's roots in Garfield Park go back to 1942 when her grandfather purchased a local mansion to turn into a boardinghouse for family members travelling from the south to Chicago. Today, Gina's Kuumba Tre Ahm garden, located on her family's original property, is one of the linchpins of the Garfield Park Garden Network, providing training opportunities for young people and aspiring gardeners and produce for the Neighborhood Market. An active member of the GPCC's Open Space Committee and an experienced gardener who was inspired by her grandmother, Gina tries something new every year, recently adding dwarf plum, apple and peach trees, as well as stevia, a natural sweetener. Her garden is named for the sixth principal of Kwaanza (creativity), as well as the initials of her grandsons. Gina's garden has evolved into an important neighborhood asset and a tribute to her family's long history in the community.

Invest in our Work

In their own unique ways, community members like Gina, Eddie and Montrel serve as role models for everyone working to honor Garfield Park's history and its bright future as a healthy, safe and prospering place to live and work. During this holiday season, help us support their efforts in 2015 by donating to the GPCC today.

[Make A Donation](#)