

PREPARING FOR THE GOOD (AND HEALTHY) LIFE

Jameka Lowery (left) and Alice Harris, chef of the Best Food in Town restaurant, inspect purple-hull peas from the BGA garden.

If you are preparing for a life of work, shouldn't you prepare for the life to be a healthy one?

That has been a theme of Boys, Girls, Adults Community Development Center's School to Workplace program, now in its fourth year.



The school-to-work program advances two of BGACDC's big goals - educating children for good careers and preparing them for healthy livelihoods in a region and community where diabetes and unhealthy lifestyles are a problem.

Jameka Lowery exemplifies the school-to-work transition. The 2015 valedictorian at Marvell-Elaine High School, Lowery has participated in the summer internship program for three years along with nearly all the other BGACDC educational programs since she was a tot. One summer she worked at Means Dental Clinic, another in the Marvell-Elaine School District. This summer, she has worked with Mrs. Beatrice Shelby, executive director of BGACDC, in working the BGACDC garden and hoophouse, which is sort of a natural greenhouse where fresh vegetables can be grown year-round without the elaborate heating and ventilation systems that greenhouses require.

The garden furnishes fresh foods for the BGACDC restaurant, Best Food in Town, and is a model for people in the community to use small spaces to raise their own healthy foods. Lowery also is using the summer to beautify the BGACDC headquarters and make it more welcoming to the community. The School to Workplace program, formerly funded by the Foundation for the Mid-South, is partially funded this year by the Carl B. King Foundation.



Lowery will enroll at the University of Arkansas at Pine Bluff this month and major in early childhood education.

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August 2015