

# ANNUAL REPORT 2024

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PREPARED BY  
The Neighborhood Leadership  
Development Program



Jack, Joseph and Morton Mandel Foundation



Neighborhood Leadership Development Program

*A Connection for Community Change*

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**Welcome to The Neighborhood Leadership Development Program.**

Enclosed you will find two sections detailing different aspects of NLDP's programming: a Demographic Profile with statistics for our program graduates from Cohorts I through XVI; and, a Graduate Grant Program summary for the completed 2023 grants.

- Demographic Profile, Cohorts I-XVI (pg. 1)
- Graduate Grant Program Final Report, 2023 (pg. 6)





# DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE

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The Demographic Profile outlines the program graduates from Cohorts I through XVI.

Each cohort is comprised of approximately 22 engaged community leaders actively serving Cleveland neighborhoods. NLDP participants vary in age, educational background and more.







# NLDP COHORTS I-XVI DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE

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17

NLDP is a 17-year-old neighborhood leadership training program.

310

There are 310 graduates of NLDP active in every neighborhood of Cleveland.

1/3

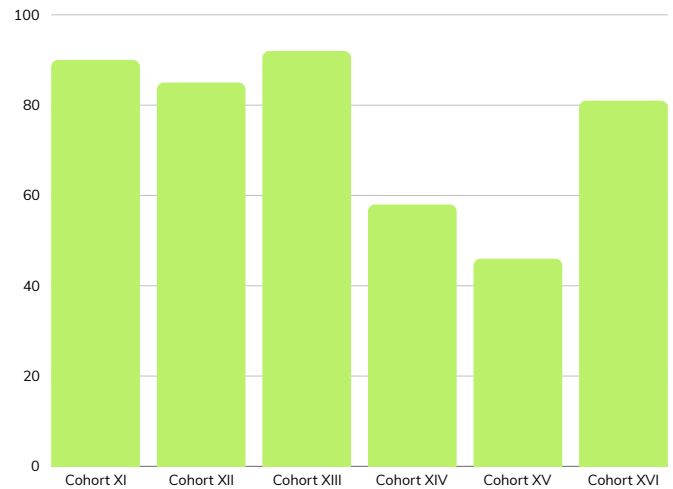
One out of every three applicants is selected to participate in NLDP.

16

The program has 16 sessions over 11 months.

## Number of Applications Received

The Neighborhood Leadership Development Program received 81 applications in 2023 for Cohort XVI, with 22 participants being selected for the cohort.



## Graduate Engagement

A key component of the program's sustainability and durability is the measure of how many graduates remain actively involved in community improvement activities and to what degree graduates collaborate with each other. NLDP promotes graduate engagement and collaboration through a variety of mechanisms including networking events, social media and one-on-one meetings. NLDP measures continued community engagement by surveying graduates during individual meetings. The figures below reflect the results of a survey of the graduates from 2017-2018.

65%

of NLDP graduates are working on the same project as when they began in NLDP

77%

of NLDP graduates are collaborating with fellow graduates

96%

of NLDP graduates are still engaged in community work

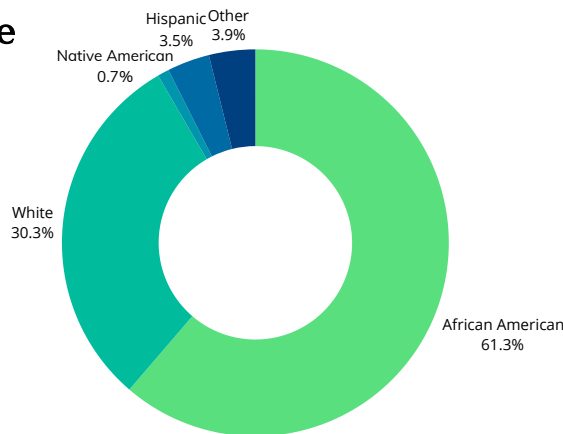
## Graduate Board Participation

Non-profit board participation is another indicator of the impact that NLDP graduates are having on Cleveland and the region. As of 2024, 37% of NLDP graduates are serving on one or more non-profit boards. Part of this growth has occurred through organic connections graduates are making in the community, and part is due to board matching at NLDP.

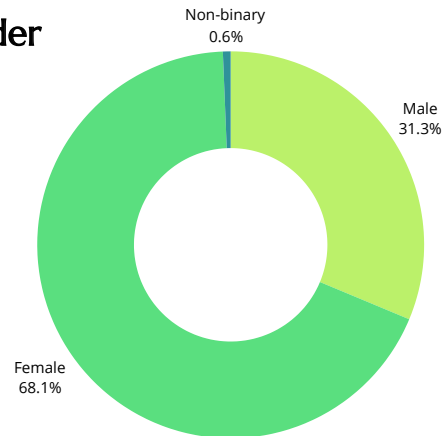
37%

Ages of participants vary from mid-20's to mid-70's. NLDP participants come from a wide range of educational backgrounds, and there is no educational requirement to participate. NLDP maintains a focus on improving neighborhood leadership in the City of Cleveland. Participants work on projects and programs throughout the city. The vast majority of graduates reside in the City of Cleveland, with the remainder residing in inner-ring suburbs.

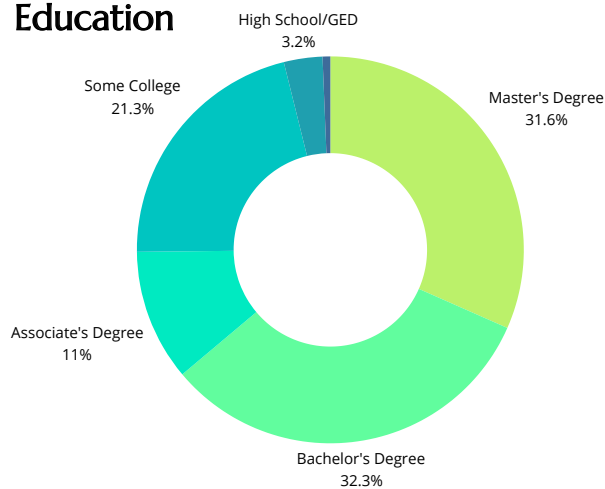
## Race



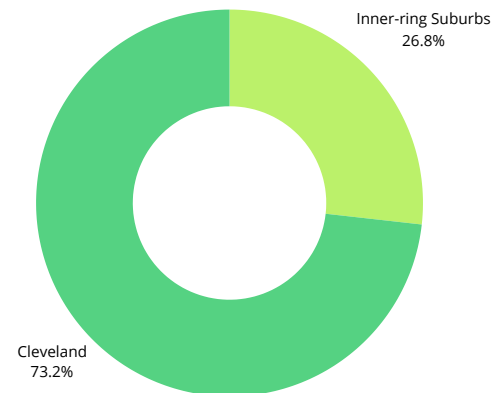
## Gender



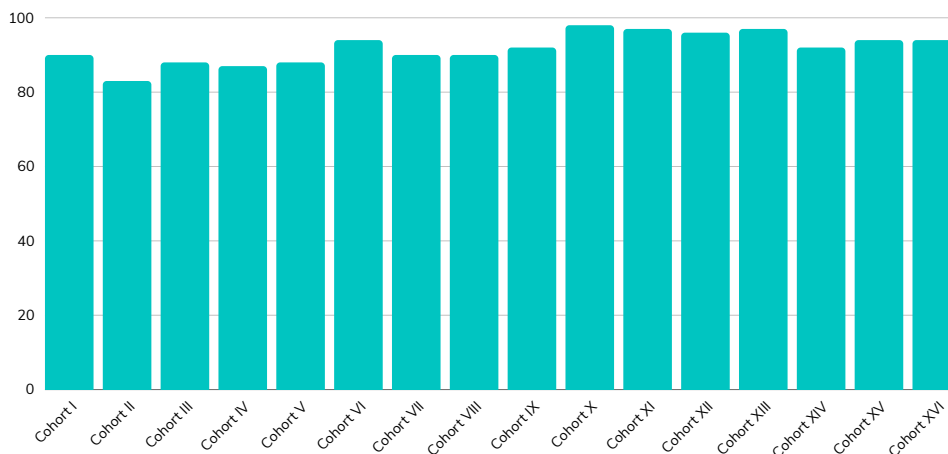
## Education



## Residence



## Attendance By Cohort

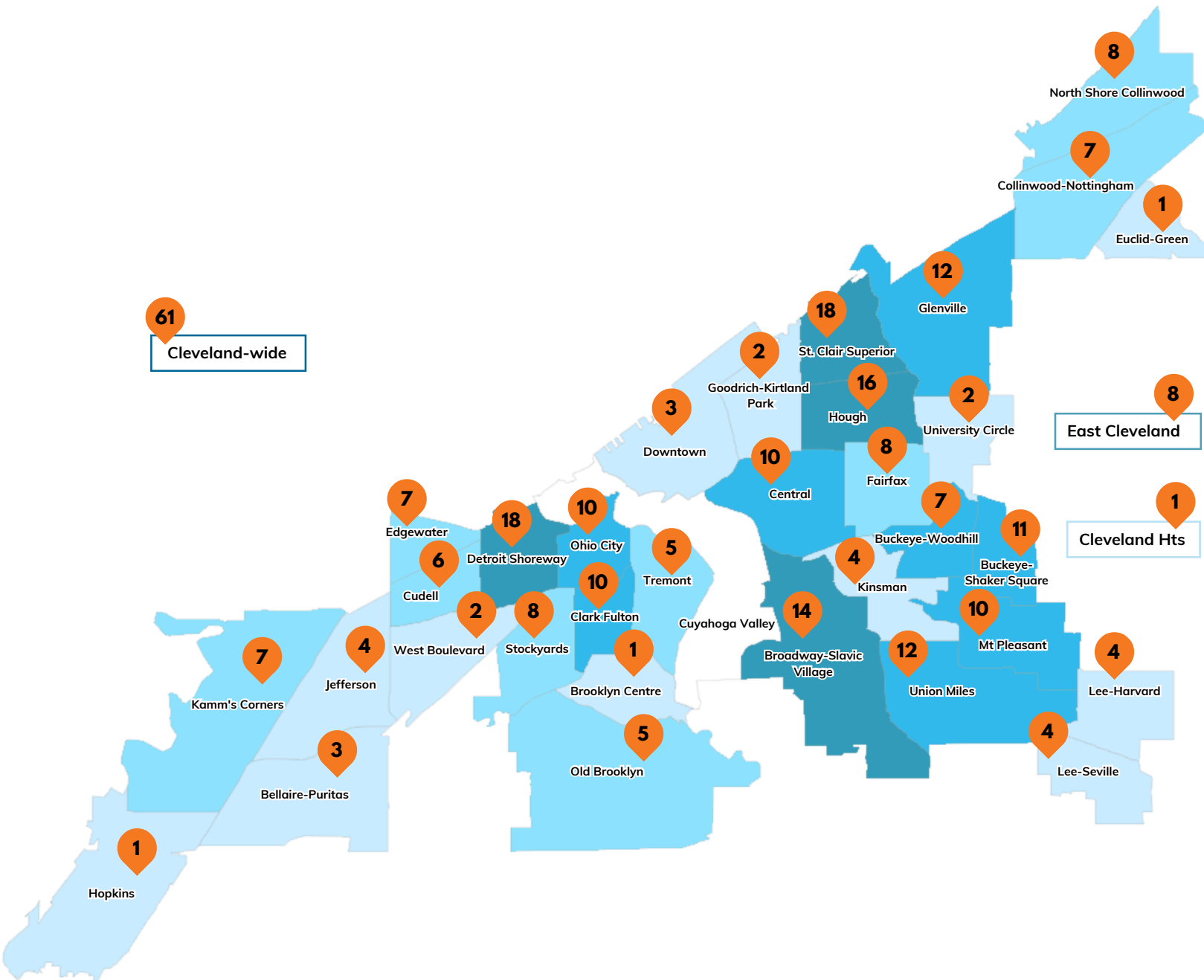


Average Session Attendance





NLDP graduates are serving every neighborhood in Cleveland and some inner-ring suburbs. Below is a map showcasing where graduates from Cohorts I-XVI are working, and how many graduate-led projects are in each neighborhood.



# GRADUATE GRANT FINAL REPORT

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The Graduate Grant Final Report includes information from reports submitted by NLDP Graduate Grantees during the 2023 grant cycle.

At the time of this writing, NLDP's Graduate Grant Program has awarded over \$320,000 in grant funds to graduate projects since the program's inception in 2013, impacting 76% of Cleveland's neighborhoods. Even as we have grown the program, the need for Graduate Grants continues to outpace available funds.





## **The Neighborhood Leadership Development Program**

### **Graduate Support Grant Program**

The Graduate Support Grant Program is designed to assist NLDP's developing leaders by providing grant support to their neighborhoods and to increase the leadership capacity of the graduates. Enclosed you will find the final reports for NLDP's 2023 Graduate Support Grant Program. The final reports in this document will outline each grantee's project and how they utilized the NLDP Graduate Grant funds.

**Total Grants Awarded: \$82,500**

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**Joe Black – NLDP Cohort VIII – Reverse RideAlong – Cleveland-wide and East Cleveland**

**Grant Award: \$5,000**

#### **Project Description**

- The Reverse RideAlong (RRA) is a community-driven initiative that transforms the conventional police ride-along model, empowering residents to lead community activities for service providers unfamiliar with specific neighborhoods. The primary objective is to actively engage community members as authorities in their own neighborhoods, deliberately showcasing assets that directly or indirectly impact service delivery. The overarching goal of these interactions is to foster community building by forging authentic relationships between residents and service providers. The RRA holds significance as it employs relationship-building strategies to deconstruct power dynamics and mitigate bias.

**Josiah Britt – NLDP Cohort XIV – myDot Period Poverty Campaign – Cleveland-wide**

**Grant Award: \$2,500**

#### **Project Description**

- CollectivExpress' myDot: Period Poverty Campaign seeks to address the lack of menstrual health resources and education in Cleveland. myDot fights against period poverty by providing pads and menstrual health information for those newer to menstruating, and building partnerships with social service organizations as an additional layer of support. When they entered the campaign's third year, they drafted several goals to further their efforts and create sustainability for the program, including assembling and distributing 1000 Pink Packs, collaborating with more NLDP graduates and providing five menstruation health education programs, engaging at least 100 menstruating aged students at partner schools.

**Becca Britton – NLDP Cohort II – Neighborhood Pets Food Pantry – Slavic Village**

**Grant Award: \$10,000**

**Project Description**

- The Neighborhood Pets Food Pantry provides their clients, all of whom are Cleveland area families with low-income, with access to pet food and cat litter assistance between 3-5 days per week. Their clients were able to come to the Neighborhood Pets Resource Center on their open days (Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday) and were also able to request food at their pet's wellness appointments (held on various Wednesdays and Fridays). Clients received one gallon bag of dog food per dog and one quart bag of food per cat, up to a maximum of 4 bags of each type of food.

**Erika Ervin-Acy – NLDP Cohort XIII – Annual Bookbag & School Supply Giveaway – Glenville**

**Grant Award: \$5,000**

**Project Description**

- Gardening in the District prepares neighborhood youth for learning in the coming school year to help them feel confident starting a new journey and to give them hope to prosper in all that they do. Every year since the start of their Bookbag and School Supply events, Gardening in the District has reached at least 100 young people throughout the community. The event includes more than just bookbags and school supplies, offering neighborhood youth haircuts or braids, prepared food at the event, and fresh fruits, vegetables and snacks to take home.

**Odetta Fields – NLDP Cohort XIV – Southeast Cleveland Resource Center – Slavic Village**

**Grant Award: \$5,000**

**Project Description**

- The Southeast Cleveland Resource Center opened in October 2022 and exists to meet the many different needs of the community. Located in Slavic Village, the Center serves all residents of Cleveland, with a focus on those who live in Slavic Village and surrounding southeast neighborhoods. One of their main objectives is to serve youth in the community by providing mentoring, summer lunches, summer activities, after school snacks and meals, help with homework and activities on the weekend. In 2023, the Center launched a Summer Lunch Program and a Youth Mentoring Program alongside a 15-year-old youth ambassador from the neighborhood.

### **Chinetha Hall – NLDP Cohort XI – Hasani Garden Camp – West Park**

**Grant Award: \$2,500**

#### **Project Description**

- Hasani Garden Camp is a horticultural-based program offering hands-on learning experiences that foster youth development in gardening, nutrition and environmental awareness. Their curriculum-based camp provides a nurturing environment, catering to a diverse range of youth, including those with special needs. Their projects address food insecurities, promote healthy mental practices and violence prevention and also include social emotional learning activities to empower youth with knowledge about sustainability, environmental stewardship, disaster preparedness, and artistic expression through art therapy. Their camp serves as both an educational haven and a place for enjoyment, cultivating learning that sparks curiosity and engagement.

### **Kelly Jackson – NLDP Cohort VI – Roots to Trees – Kinsman and Mt Pleasant**

**Grant Award: \$5,000**

#### **Project Description**

- Roots to Trees is a didactic, multigenerational approach to promoting wellbeing for families living within marginalized conditions by incorporating modalities scientifically proven to alleviate stress. Due to certain factors like the seemingly unyielding inflation, shortage of affordable housing and astronomical rent hikes in areas historically known as being the most affordable throughout Cuyahoga County, temporary plans to live in shelters are being prolonged for some families while pushing others further onto the pathways of homelessness. By espousing yoga, mindfulness, and breathwork, Roots to Trees encourages family stabilization by addressing challenging physical, mental and emotional health outcomes associated with poverty.

### **Charmaine Jordan – NLDP Cohort VIII – Central Youth Leadership Council – Central**

**Grant Award: \$5,000**

#### **Project Description**

- Hosted by the Men & Women of Central (MWOC), the Central Youth Leadership Council is an after-school mentoring program for teens 13-18 years old. Program participants are required to attend 8-10 training and educational sessions that will define the program foundations and provide leadership development training. Sessions take place at Friendly Inn Settlement House and are facilitated by MWOC staff and guest speakers. Trainings consist of leadership development, the power of civic engagement, history of Central, identifying community projects, and more. Students also attend community council meetings and volunteer at community events.



## **Dennis Knowles – NLDP Cohort VIII – Summer Fishing Program – Cleveland-wide**

**Grant Award: \$7,500**

### **Project Description**

- The Fishing Foundation’s summer fishing program provides teens an opportunity to participate in a sport that can lead to something that they can do for the rest of their lives – fishing. The fourth most popular sport in the U.S., fishing is something that participants expressed a longtime desire to do, but never had an opportunity or the proper education and equipment. Training occurs in four specific areas: aquatic education, casting, water safety and identifying local fish species. Sustainability through “catch and release” is also practiced. Attendees receive a t-shirt, refreshments, lunch, a rod and reel and an instructional manual.

## **Letitia Lopez – NLDP Cohort XI – Julia de Burgos Cultural Arts Center – Brooklyn Centre**

**Grant Award: \$10,000**

### **Project Description**

- Julia de Burgos Cultural Arts Center transforms lives by preserving, educating and promoting Latino heritage through the teaching and practice of history, culture, the visual, performing and literary arts. Programming at Julia de Burgos consists of Family Art Nights, Youth Art Classes (led by local Latino artists), Miss Latina Image Leadership Program, dance classes, book clubs and more. Special Latino events are also hosted there, and they are developing a Unidos por el Arte Artist Initiative that seeks to support local Latino artists through micro-grants, teaching opportunities, studio space and more.

## **Tonya Perkins-Stoudermire – NLDP Cohort IX – Bessie’s Angels – East Cleveland**

**Grant Award: \$9,000**

### **Project Description**

- Bessie’s Angels, a nonprofit based in Cleveland, Ohio, dedicated to nurturing, empowering, and educating young women who have experienced the foster care system. They also provide low-income housing to support these young women in building stable lives. Many of the girls they serve come from low-income backgrounds, with some living below the poverty line. Their warm and welcoming homes offer the young women stability and a sense of belonging. In 2023, Bessie’s Angels partnered with Cuyahoga Community College and the Junior League of Cleveland to host a Girls Summit for girls impacted by foster care, ages 16-21.

**Michelle Walsh – NLDP Cohort XIV – Providence House East Campus Mural Project – Buckeye/Shaker**

**Grant Award: \$6,000**

**Project Description**

- Providence House, Inc. was founded in 1981 to provide emergency shelter for children in Greater Cleveland whose families were experiencing a crisis. To address an alarming increase in demand for their services on Cleveland's east side, Providence House launched a campaign and later opened an East Campus in Cleveland's Buckeye-Shaker neighborhood, which includes a 20-bed Crisis Nursery and new Community Services Hub. The East Campus is in the historic Weizer Building, which is located on a major thoroughfare centered in a larger \$60+ million neighborhood revitalization zone and was the site for the mural project.

**Veronica Walton – NLDP Cohort III – Urban Homesteading – Glenville**

**Grant Award: \$10,000**

**Project Description**

- Urban Homesteading through Community Caring is a practice used by Food Depot to Health to create learning communities. Food Depot to Health installed Sensory Garden spaces at their garden located at Stonebrook-White Montessori Campus (S-WMC) in Glenville. The S-WMC was redesigned to include edible and perennial plants, aromatic ground cover and herbs. Growing tents were installed inside of the classroom building space to provide the opportunity to grow mushrooms and herbs all year. An outside space was designed to include weather tolerant manipulative blocks and a large rain stick teams could use for sensory stimulation.