

Oregon Food Bank Learning Gardens
Volunteer of the Month

July 2018



Renee Alexander

Thanks to Renee, the Eastside Learning Garden is now hosting honey bees! As the organizer & knowledgeable leader of this project, she spent a lot of time this spring securing donations (from bees to hives to bee suits) and getting things up and running. **You can find her at Dig In! shifts twice a month (July 14th & 21st, August 4th & 18th) to participate in hive inspections and see the bees up close!**

After finishing up the Apprentice Beekeeper Program through the Extension service, she was looking for a way to earn her volunteer hours as well as provide a space for helping the public learn more about bees in a relaxed way. She says, "Collaborating with OFB creates more bee awareness in a segment of the population that I don't think would have access/ability/inclination to manage an entire hive. My thought is if they are able to learn (as I did when I started gardening) how the bees help the production, then I think it's also possible that when they hear something in the news about bee populations, they might be more inclined to at least listen and, in turn, talk about them with their community." Renee invites people of all ages to participate, in fact her son joins in as well.

Renee enjoys volunteering because it keeps her grounded and centered. She says, "Growing up we were a recipient of many public services and many people assisted me along the way from learning different social skills to committing to something and seeing it to fruition. I like being a small part of returning the assistance I received for so many years and help be a part of a supportive community."

Renee is also a Seed to Supper Facilitator and as been involved with Cooking Matters. Thank you Renee for all your work so we can host beehives at the garden!