

## Trailblazer: Good Samaritan Hospital

*Good Samaritan Hospital embarked on a project to build an employee/community vegetable and herb garden on its campus. Volunteers planted a variety of crops, including kale, collards, lettuce, and broccoli. After the initial harvest, the hospital plans to donate a portion of the food grown to a local food bank. The goal of the garden is to teach employees about healthy food options, creating their own gardens, and sharing the harvest with the community. The garden is positioned in a heavily traveled employee corridor, enhancing visibility and encouraging participation.*



Good Samaritan Hospital always looks to promote sustainability and healthy diet and nutrition options to its patients, visitors and employees. Recently, Good Samaritan Hospital embarked on a project to build an employee/community vegetable and herb garden on campus. The garden, which is an extension of the hospital's "Green...for Good" sustainability program, has been a labor of love for many in the Good Samaritan family. Early in the planning phases, it was identified that many obstacles would have to be overcome in order to make the vision a reality. From the initial research, Good Samaritan Hospital found that the only location on campus suitable for a garden was the hardest piece of land to work with. The site that was selected needed extensive modifications,

including a retaining wall built to support proper plant growth. While an expense like this might typically derail a project such as a garden, this challenge was overcome through the commitment and resolve of Good Samaritan Executive Leadership, the "Green...for Good" Green Team, and several committed volunteers.

Once the wall was complete, the marketing department at Good Samaritan Hospital launched a volunteer and awareness campaign in order to encourage people to participate in the initial planting and maintenance activities necessary for the fall crops.

The initial soil preparation and planting bed construction was completed on August 24, 2011, and the first crops were planted the next day. Hospital executives, marketing, clinical and OR nurses, nurse educators, nurse managers, facilities, EVS and other volunteers helped in the bed creation and fall planting.

After the initial harvest, the hospital planned to donate a portion of the food grown to a local food bank, and give the volunteers some of the items grown to take home for their hard work. The goal of the garden is to teach employees about healthy food options, how to create their own gardens, and share the harvest with the community. The garden is



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Good Samaritan feels that the garden has fostered a sense of community and goodwill at the hospital, while raising awareness about the importance of local crops and sustainable plants.

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