UC Santa Cruz

Farm apprentice shares national award in White House presentation

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By UCSC Public Affairs

Karen Washington, a 2008 graduate of the apprenticeship class at the Center for Agroecology and Sustainable Food Systems at UC Santa Cruz was honored at the White House December 17 for her work with urban gardens in the Bronx.

First Lady Michelle Obama presented Washington and Gregory Long, director of the New York Botanical Garden, with a 2010 National Medal for Museum and Library Service. The National Medal is the nation's highest honor for museums and libraries that make extraordinary civic, educational, economic, environmental, and social contributions.

Washington was recently hired as an instructor in the new Farm School NYC: the New York City School of Urban Agriculture, which begins in January. A lifelong New Yorker, she is a member of the botanical garden's board. She has been a community activist in the Bronx since 1985 where she has helped turn empty lots into community gardens as head of Bronx Green-Up.

As a member of La Familia Verde Garden Coalition, she launched City Farms Market, bringing garden fresh vegetables to her neighbors. She is also on the board of Just Food, an all-volunteer effort promoting a holistic approach to food, hunger, and agriculture issues, and she leads workshops on food growing and food justice for community gardeners all over New York City.

See Also
• Center for Agroecology and Sustainable Food Systems [http://casfs.ucsc.edu]
• New York Botanical Garden [http://www.nybg.org/]