

## Gardening at 8<sup>th</sup> and Diamond

*By Danielle Vasquez, Farm Philly*

It was on a hot day last week, just as the evening cool began to take hold of the city, that I had the pleasure of meeting some of Philadelphia's finest young gardeners. Sincere, Brianna, Jarrell and Jada live near 8<sup>th</sup> and Diamond Recreation Center and are some of the heart and brains behind the gardens that grow there today. Our Junior Farmers Garden Educator Sarah Morris met this crew while teaching gardening during the after school program, and was so inspired by their determination and vision that she had to share their story with our team. This group of four has devoted time and energy, not only to the gardens growing at their local rec center, but have now turned their attention to their own backyard, and it doesn't stop there. Brianna and Sincere shared their vision with us, and we cannot wait to see what comes from their dream.

"We want to sell [our produce] at farmers markets and make enough money to buy a truck," says Brianna. Sincere adds, "I want to make money so I can buy more seeds and grow more plants. I want to be a gardener and farmer."

This process starts in the backyard where watermelons and beans are already starting to grow. Jarrell and Sincere both want to see strawberries growing in their new garden, while Brianna and Jada are hoping to see broccoli and carrots in the autumn and spring seasons.

When asked where the inspiration for gardening came from, Sincere told me that it began with helping his mom in the garden since he was little. He says now "I like gardening more than ever." Jarrell's garden enthusiasm began when he was seven, and his friends started growing different plants. Brianna was six when she saw some gardens on a website and told Mr. Dana at 8<sup>th</sup> and Diamond Recreation Center that she thought there should be gardens there for the kids to grow different fruits and vegetables in. Now the youngest of the four, Jada has joined in on the fun, and a real gardening team exists that would make anybody proud.



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