

Dear STARS,

In 2008, senior Heather Grace-Rutledge designed and implemented a preschool garden-based education program for her senior capstone project in Environmental Studies and Early Childhood Education majors. The program partnered with The Painted Turtle Farm, our student-run organically grown vegetable garden on campus, and The Growing Place, the college's preschool, to introduce preschoolers aged 3-4 years to the garden and get them involved in planning, growing, maintaining, and harvesting vegetables from their own plots. Over the course of the program, Heather saw tremendous learning take place as the children made connections between seeds, plants, and food.

Since then, the summer interns at the Painted Turtle Farm have continued to work with the preschool to implement the program. The last three years have been incredibly successful, bringing renewed enthusiasm to the partnership and increasing community awareness and involvement in the student garden. The preschool students and their parents and teachers greatly appreciate the program and its hands-on learning curriculum, and the student interns love interacting with young children and implementing the environmental education aspect of the student garden.

We feel this program is particularly innovative and worthy of STARS credit.

Thank you,

Erin Richards '13
Sara W. Tower '12
Hannah Grose '13

Painted Turtle Farm Summer Interns 2011
Environmental Students Department
Gettysburg College