

Pie Social celebrates spring

By Stella Jiang
Staff Writer

To celebrate the start of spring and the end of a cold winter, South Eastern Efforts Developing Sustainable Spaces, a nonprofit educational garden in Durham, is hosting its seventh annual Pie Social on April 25.

“April is a really fun time for people to come into the garden,” said Laurel Shulman, SEEDS’ office and communications manager. “We are all lacking sunshine and engagement with our community.”

Durham Inner-city Gardeners, one of SEEDS’ programs, started the Pie Social as an annual spring event to raise funds for its summer salaries.

The DIG program helps high school students develop entrepreneurship and leadership skills by growing food. Six members of the DIG youth crew are involved in planning the Pie Social this year, and they started planning the event in December.

Shulman said students in the event’s planning committee work 20 hours a week and they designed all of the family-friendly activities, including pie eating, face painting and a pie walk for kids of all ages.

“This is a bit of an institution since it’s been happening for seven years,” Shulman said. “People expect it, and people really enjoy it.”

Rachel Rana, the Pie Social’s volunteer coordinator, said the money from the event will help kids in the community farm sustainably.

“It’s really great about teaching kids how to farm sustainably and eat



Laurel Shulman, SEEDS’ office and communications manager, advertises the educational garden’s Pie Social that will take place on April 25. This is SEEDS’ seventh year hosting the event. (Staff photo by Stella Jiang)

healthy,” Rana said. “This is like my target audience. I really wanted to have a lot of kids to help.”

Shulman said she hopes that more people come to this year’s Pie Social and expects to raise more money than SEEDS did last year.

“I think the more people we can get into it, the better,” she said.

Shulman said the Pie Social introduces the community to SEEDS and brings people to the garden in the springtime.

“It’s a great way for community members to meet, to help them better understand what SEEDS does,” Rana said. “It’s also great for people to try pies.”

Shulman said the Pie Social is not only about eating pies. It also gets the community involved with SEEDS.

“This is our first big event that we have, and we welcome people to the garden,” Shulman said.

Starting in March, the event’s planning committee members posted fliers in the neighborhood and handed out free tickets to downtown companies and organizations to advertise the upcoming Pie Social.

“I am still continuing to hand out

“People expect it, and people really enjoy it.”

**— Laurel Shulman,
SEEDS’ office and
communications manager**

numerous free tickets to community members or to people who’ve been involved in SEEDS, encouraging people who may not have the money to actually come,” Shulman said.

She said volunteers and restaurants have helped the event planning stay on schedule.

“We have a lot of really great relationships with restaurants and bakeries in the area that donate a lot of pies for the event,” Shulman said. “We need 130 pies.”

Besides the pies donated by local restaurants, community residents can donate their pies through the SEEDS website.

“(SEEDS) is like a hidden treasure,” Rana said. “SEEDS is really representative and supportive of diversity and working to build kids that are more able to farm.”

Pie Social Event Information

- Date: Saturday, April 25
- Time: 1-5 p.m.
- Location: 706 Gilbert St. in Durham
- For more information and to purchase tickets, visit www.seedsnc.org/pie-social/.
- To volunteer at the event, email info@seedsnc.org.