



Thalia Barrett

Donald F. Harris Agriscience & Technology Center

Bloomfield CT 06002



My name is Thalia Barrett and I am currently a 10th grader at Bloomfield High. I am in my second year at the Donald F. Harris Sr. AgriScience & Technology Center, located on the high school campus. Being an agricultural science student has benefitted me a lot. Rather than sitting in a classroom learning how to save the environment, I have actually been given the chance through my agricultural science program to really save the environment. I've helped the Connecticut River Salmon Association by raising salmon to the fry stage, and then releasing them into various waterways throughout the state alongside the D.E.E.P. I have also had the opportunity to work with the Nature Conservancy in planting a variety of trees in local and neighboring communities.

Since the last time I had the opportunity to speak with senators, legislators, and state representatives along with other members of the committee, the Center received an additional \$27 thousand dollars. We really appreciate it, and I would like to personally say Thank you. As a result of the additional funding, we were able to purchase much needed furniture to replace broken chairs, desks and other equipment. We were able to expand the Apiculture and Aquaponics initiatives the Center promotes. Through aquaponics we are able to recycle the waste or effluent of fish and use it as nutrients for plant growth. This is a preferred model that prevents waste water from ending up in local rivers and streams. We were also able to donate the produce grown to Bloomfield United Methodists Church soup kitchen to aid in reducing their cost in feeding the homeless or anyone in town in need of a hot meal.

I would like you to take a moment to think about what kind of opportunity this is for a student like me to be able to speak to the legislature. What a message to send to a teenager about how important it is for my voice to be heard. I along with many other students are finding ways to make healthier lifestyle choices that not only benefit my local community but radiates to a larger global presence, answering the basic question of where I fit into this world. With your continued funding and support teachers can employ much needed learning opportunities for me and my peers that will help to prepare us for the real world. I am a direct benefit of your support and funding. Thank you.