

Georgia Hale



Harvesting crops and plucking chickens? Running a farm in Alameda? How crazy is that?

That's probably exactly what Georgia Hale thought when she was first introduced to the Growing Youth Project (GYP), the innovative community farm project recently started by the Alameda Point Collaborative (APC) at Alameda Point, a non-profit organization that provides housing and services to previously homeless families.

In the spring of 2008, when Hale arrived at APC with her family at age 17 after a move from her childhood home of Indiana, she wasn't looking to get dirty or deal with bugs and chicken guts. However, after just one day of facing her fear of spiders, she was harvesting carrots, celery, squash, greens and other produce. Then, when she delivered the fresh produce to APC's community of over 200 needy households, Hale found her higher purpose. "I've never been a part of a group that gives food to people who don't have any at all. When I was done doing it I was like 'whoa, this is so cool, I gave food to somebody who really needed it,'" Hale explains.

Ever since, Hale has been a key driving force behind the success and growth of GYP, and has expanded her responsibilities along the way to include GYP's chickens. Says Katie Casale, GYP's Coordinator, "Georgia has made tremendous strides since starting with GYP. The idea of farm work, dirt, chicken poop, and healthy food is not the sexiest or hippest job, but Georgia never complained about any of that. She has helped slaughter, butcher and prepare chickens with no qualms at all."

Hale is also very active in APC's progressive mission to provide nutritional education to its residents and inspire healthy living. She hopes to apply her expanding knowledge as a chef someday and open her own restaurant.