



Jill Warren Lucas | June 5, 2013



*See related story.*

SEEDS of Durham, which promotes the principles and practice of sustainable agriculture, organic gardening, food security and environmental stewardship, received the 2013 Harry Chapin Self-Reliance Award Monday during [Why Hunger's](#) annual gala in New York City.

"Why Hunger is all about supporting grassroots efforts and the people who do the work," says SEEDS Executive Director Emily Egge, who attended the celebration and participated in a day of training and organized networking. "It puts us in a position to really look forward and look at how the program might grow."

The \$10,000 grant will be used to strengthen and expand youth leadership through its [Durham Inner-City Gardeners \(DIG\)](#) project. SEEDS was one of [five innovative community-based organizations](#) that work to fight hunger and poverty around the country recognized with the award.

Egge said the chance to learn from and talk with other honorees and Why Hunger staff and partners reinforced her own dedication to SEEDS' role in helping the Durham community tackle persistent issues of food insecurity.

"It's wonderful to know that we've got this national network of folks that are going through the same struggles and triumphs that we are," she says. "Having the opportunity to share and learn will only strengthen what we do."

Egge did not get to meet personally this year's winner of the ASCAP Harry Chapin Humanitarian Award, Yoko Ono. The artist and widow of John Lennon is an outspoken social advocate whose work can be followed at [imaginepeace.com](#). Her *Imagine There's No Hunger* campaign provides nutritious meals and agricultural training to children in 17 counties.

"I think that Why Hunger does a really wonderful job of leveraging its resources and reaching out to folks like Yoko Ono, and so many of the other past humanitarian award honorees, who are willing to use their star power to promote the things they believe in," Egge says. "It opens up a much bigger audience and base of support for us all."