

**GrowingGreat is Awarded \$10,000 Grant Through
Aetna's "Healthy Food Fight" Contest**

Mary Edwards' recipe is voted "Fan Favorite" online

Leading Southern California school garden and nutrition organization, **GrowingGreat**, was awarded a \$10,000 grant by Aetna. To win the prize, Pomona, CA-based cook Mary Edwards was voted online as the "fan favorite" of a national cooking contest, *The Aetna Healthy Food Fight*, for which she named the non-profit organization her recipient.

"We are so grateful for Aetna, Mary Edwards and the thousands of fans that made this grant possible," says Sarah Gelb, **GrowingGreat Executive Director**. "We could not have done it without the relentless support of our fans. The grant will go a long way, inspiring more kids to adopt healthy eating habits through **GrowingGreat's** innovative parent-led classroom nutrition and school garden programs - empowering the next generation to live longer and healthier lives."

The Aetna Healthy Food Fight contest was designed by the major healthcare benefits company in 2010 to encourage people to adopt healthier lifestyles through healthy cooking. Nationwide cooks participated in regional cook-offs. Four finalists were chosen and flown to New York to compete in a final cook-off judged by celebrity chef, Bobby Flay. During the days leading up to the event, fans voted online for their favorite recipe of the four finalists. The cook with the most votes won a \$10,000 grant from Aetna for the non-profit of their choice.

"I picked GrowingGreat because I just loved their hands-on, grassroots approach to promoting healthy eating habits," explains Mary Edwards. "In particular I admire the work they are doing with children by getting them involved with their own gardens. I have seen how my own three-year-old grandson's love of seeing things grow has helped him become a healthier eater."

Mary Edwards' winning recipe for "[Salmon Pozole](#)" received 6,800 votes. This year's cook-off winner was Merry Graham, whose dish, "Black Bean and Sweet Potato Porridge with Jicama Pico de Gallo," helped her win \$10,000 worth of groceries from Recipe.com.

GrowingGreat was established in 1999. It currently serves 16,000 students in Los Angeles County, operating in more than 30 schools in 10 school districts. Its curriculum is also implemented in Northern California, Nevada and Hawaii.

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