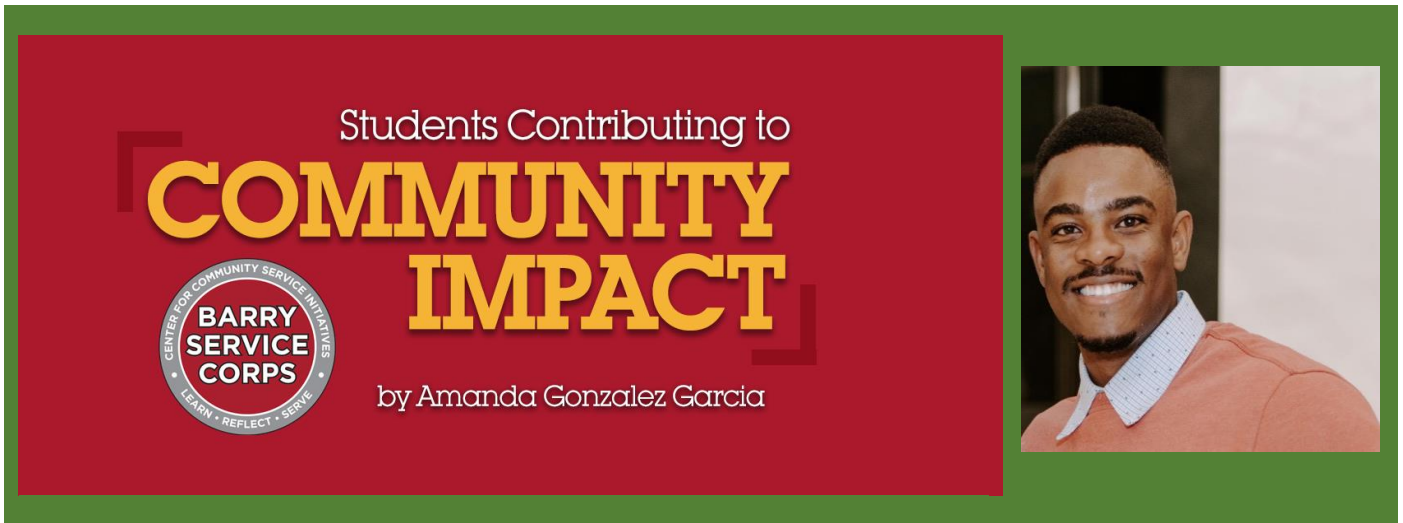


# Samuel Vilmeau Takes Pride in Urban Gardening to Relieve Neighborhood Food Insecurity



**Samuel Vilmeau is contributing to community impact through the Barry Urban Garden (BUG). The Barry Service Corps (BSC) Fellow is committed to doing his part to address food insecurity by serving in the BUG.**

“To have a successful garden and produce,” Samuel says, “we must first ensure that our garden is thriving.” For it to thrive, he explains, it needs maintenance.

And that’s where Samuel comes in. He has embraced the role of urban gardener, helping to maintain the garden throughout the year.

“Everything I do in the garden ensures we can grow more and learn from each season,” he says.

Just recently, for example, he put a trellis in place to support the growth of dragon fruit.

The [BUG](#) is “a community agriculture initiative that provides ... produce to low-income residents of Miami neighborhoods that the U.S. Department of Agriculture has categorized as urban food deserts.” The project also encourages healthy eating among residents of Miami-Dade County.

A junior exercise physiology major, Samuel hopes one day to build a community gym. ... This won't be your regular gym, however, as it will include a community garden.

Barry students, along with faculty and staff, promote awareness of food insecurity. Students, supervised by the BUG coordinator, do most of the planting, weeding, harvesting, and distribution of the produce from the BUG.

“Samuel came into the garden with a positive attitude,” recalls Kaitlyn Gallagher, the BUG coordinator. “He has kept up with an amazing work ethic since day one.”

Samuel does take pride in urban gardening to relieve neighborhood food insecurity.

According to Ms. Gallagher, Samuel “has dedicated hours in the garden to ensuring the crops grow to their fullest potential. He has directly contributed to providing fresh produce to the community.” She is “confident that he will do great with introducing students to the gardening experience.”



A junior exercise physiology major, Samuel hopes one day to build a community gym or clinic “with a safe space for family, friends, and everyone in between.” This won't be your regular gym, however, as it will include a community garden.

Samuel remembers that it was an MLK Day of Service experience that increased his motivation to serve. As he assisted with work in the BUG then, he knew where he should concentrate his efforts in giving back to the community.

He became a BSC Fellow at the start of this academic year and got himself assigned to the BSC Urban Gardeners, one of six [social justice teams](#).

“BSC has helped me realize that I want to do more for others using my success. And there is so much to be done,” Samuel says with passion. “Being a member of the BSC has motivated me a lot. ... I have clearer long-term goals now.”



“The BSC has helped me realize that I want to do more for others. ... And there is so much to be done.” – Barry Service Corps Fellow Samuel Vilmeau

The setbacks and adversities that Samuel has faced have never stopped him from attaining what he desires. Born and raised in Cavalier, Haiti, he has learned to focus on what’s important in life.

“Haitians have a saying about the most important thing in your life at any point. [It] is [one of] the three Ls: *lekól* (school), *legliz* (church), *lakay* (home).”

Samuel also understands the importance of work, and of serving the community. The transfer student (from Miami Dade College), who came to the United States at an early age, has been drawing on his sociology courses through which his awareness of societal issues has grown.

Here at Barry University, his personal mission is centered on learning new ways in which he can apply what he has learned in the classroom to issues in his community—the place where he knows his service is needed most.



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September 20, 2021  
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