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Naomi Montalvo

Pre-K Teacher

School Garden Coordinator

Jose Julian Marti School 28

Elizabeth, NJ

TOP TOMATO

SHINING A SPOTLIGHT ON THOSE MAKING A DIFFERENCE IN FARM TO SCHOOL

Naomi Montalvo- Top Tomato Spring 2020

Naomi Montalvo is a Pre-K Teacher and the School Garden Coordinator at Jose Julian Marti School 28 in Elizabeth, NJ. She has been working as an educator within the district for seventeen years and has spearheaded the farm to school efforts at School 28. Her Pre-K class participates in Jersey Fresh Farm to School each year and she manages the outdoor raised garden beds, pollinator garden, and indoor vertical grow tower at the school. Ms. Montalvo works to engage the entire school community around the garden through cafeteria taste tests and themed days like seasonal scavenger hunts. She also runs an after-school gardening and cooking club sampling produce from the garden and grow tower and utilizes our Department's *Jersey Tastes!* resources throughout all her classes and lessons.

Her passion for gardening and trying new foods is infectious and she is a leader open to share her knowledge and practical skills with other educators. Ms. Montalvo presented her school's farm to school efforts at the 2nd Annual Environmental Sustainability Education Teacher Summit at The College of NJ and School 28 was honored with the V.I.P. Very Impressive Produce Award for School Year 2018-2019 from our Department for their exemplary participation in the Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program.