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Forrest's Green Resources

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provided an important service to the community AND, at the same time, learned about water quality and laboratory analysis, developed an understanding of pollution issues, learned to interpret science issues to the public, and practiced communications skills by speaking to residents. Thus, we see that service-learning combines SERVICE with LEARNING in intentional ways.

Dirty Dishes Done Dirt Cheap

Students and teachers at Thomas Reed Elementary in Shelby, Michigan participated in Earth Day last year by recycling Styrofoam trays used in their lunchroom for breakfast and lunch throughout the third week of April. With over 500 students purchasing hot lunches and nearly half of those individuals eating breakfast, many students felt it was important to discontinue the use of the trays and replace them with either biodegradable or heavy-washable plastic trays used in the past.

In researching the cost and waste of using the Styrofoam trays with the lunchroom staff, the students found that biodegradable trays were more costly and using the heavy plastic trays cost the school district additional money.

Undeterred, the students decided to continue on their quest of reducing their waste. In order to do this, the fifth graders used data they collected from the recycling project to create presentations for the school board meeting. In addition, other students wrote letters to the editor of the local newspaper, as a way of getting their voices heard and advocating for what they believe in.

As a result of this Earth Day project, the students at Thomas Reed are energized about what they can do to help others, which has in turn sparked interest in projects for next year. They are planning to create a community garden and compost site, develop a recycling team, create recycled items to sell at the student council store, and have many other great ideas in development. 

FORREST'S GREEN RESOURCES



By Forrest Clift

The following green and green education resources are a sample of the wide-variety of information available online. The information and tools listed here can be utilized by educators in developing new programs (or enhancing existing ones) that are aimed at teaching students about the environment, 'green' living, stewardship, and more.

U.S. GREEN BUILDING COUNCIL (USGBC) "Best Practices in Green Education" page

<http://www.usgbc.org>

This site provides inspiration and concrete ideas on using the "built environment" as the context of learning. Here you will find K-12, community college, and university/college programs and curriculum that will help support efforts you may want to consider for educating others about sustainability. USGBC asserts "educators learn best from hearing the stories of other educators' efforts."

Programs featured on the site have been vetted through the Excellence in Green Building Curriculum Grants and Awards Program. USGBC hopes the Green Education Database will continue to grow as educators across grade levels and disciplines share stories of their efforts across communities nationwide.

GLOBAL GREEN USA

<http://www.globalgreen.org>

This site is the American offshoot of Green Cross International (GCI) which was created by former Soviet Leader, Mikhail S. Gorbachev. Gorbachev's vision was to foster a global value shift toward a sustainable and secure future by reconnecting human populations with their surrounding environment. The mission of the U.S. group works on addressing global climate change by creating green buildings and cities.

Different sections of the website address Green Cities/Schools, Climate Solutions, Security and Sustainability, Water, and Rebuilding New Orleans.

Check out the numerous areas of facts/tidbits including water conservation and why green schools are important!

WATER CONSERVATION TIP #1

- Run your clothes washer and dishwasher only when they are full. Why?

1,000 gallons of water a month can be saved with this simple tip.

WATER CONSERVATION TIP #2

- Use the garbage disposal sparingly.

Compost food, vegetable, and fruit waste instead and save water every time.



NATIONAL GREEN WEEK

<http://www.nationalgreenweek.com>

Can you imagine how much trash one school could produce and how you might go about reducing it? An experiment conducted in June 2008 at Fisher Elementary School in Massachusetts gave way to the objective of this unique website — empowering children to become environmental stewards to help protect Earth’s valuable, natural resources. Families are also able to learn about recycling, making healthy snack choices, and the benefits of buying certain food items in bulk.

National Green Week is sponsored by IXG and the Green Education Foundation and the website features curricula information, a start-up/participation kit, educational/community/recycling resources and more.

Interesting note — a documentary about the Fisher ES project is available for viewing at the site!

MICHIGAN GREEN

<http://www.michigangreen.org>

Michigan GREEN stands for “Group for a Renewable, Energy Efficient Nation and this non-profit group works to ensure young people understand about energy conservation and environmental stewardship. You’ll find information about Michigan resources in the causes of renewable energy and energy efficiency, as well as how to apply to become a MI Green School.

A variety of news articles and videos provide a wealth of background on what is being done in the state.


EARTH FORCE

<http://www.earthforce.org>



Established in 1994, this group seeks for young people to become ‘active citizens’ who work toward improving the communities they live in, as well as the environment, both now and in the future.

Since it was created, Earth Force has developed a series of tools aimed at helping teachers facilitate civic action that is ‘driven’ by their students. Community Action and Problem Solving (CAPS) was the first program developed, and is the basis for Earth Force programming today.

Be sure to check out the Tools for Teachers tab which features numerous activities/team builders, the Earth Force “Toolbox,” and Watershed Basics. 

WATER CONSERVATION TIP #3

- Shorten the length of your shower by one or two minutes. Result?

You will save up to 150 gallons per month.

WATER CONSERVATION TIP #4

- Do you keep the water running in the sink while brushing your teeth? If so, simply turn it off while you brush.

You can save 25 gallons of water a month!

College of Education Future Teacher Endowment Fund



GRAND VALLEY
STATE UNIVERSITY
COLLEGE OF EDUCATION

The Future Teacher Endowment Fund seeks to financially support students who are finishing their undergraduate program in Education and who will be enrolling in their student teaching experience. Current and former faculty and staff in the College of Education, alumni, as well as family and friends of future educators are encouraged to support this fund.

This new fund needs your help. In order to start supporting future teachers, we need to raise \$30,000. We are on the way towards this number because of educational supporters like you.

With a gift today, you can support the next generation of teachers at Grand Valley. Did you know that the State of Michigan has ranked the COE an exemplary institution two years in a row? By assisting students at Grand Valley, you are making an investment in the next generation of teachers and the children they educate.

University full-time employees that donate to the fund will have their donation matched by the president’s office. In addition, many companies sponsor matching gift programs and will match the charitable donations made by their employees. Please visit www.gvsu.edu/development to see if your company is a matching gift organization.

To contribute to the Future Teacher Endowment Fund, please call 1-616-331-6000 or visit www.gvsu.edu/development to give online. 