Social Responsibility in Action: Adopt-A-Stream

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Embracing the Grand Valley State University College of Education’s continuing mission to teach, lead, and serve in local and world communities, a one half mile path of stream and stream bank has been adopted by the College of Education faculty and staff. The Indian Mill Stream is a small urban stream which winds through Grand Rapids’ West Side neighborhoods, parks, and business districts eventually emptying into the Grand River south of the Ann Street Bridge.

On the morning of Friday, October 20, 2006, a small group of committed faculty, staff, and students gathered at the Indian Mill Stream near Alpine Avenue to begin clean up, monitoring, and restoration efforts of this natural resource. The initial clean up was a two hour excursion of wading through the stream’s waters and walking along the stream’s bank combing the area for litter and debris. In addition to the large amount of generic trash, some of the more interesting items found and disposed of during this initial visit include electrical wire, drywall, a paint roller, a large barnacle encrusted industrial pulley, an unopened pack of Snapple bottles, a construction barrel, two hub caps, a tire tread, a complete tire including rim, an electrical outlet, a large living room sized carpet remnant, a street sign post, two mufflers, part of a letter to someone who was believed to be dead, and a Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles sleeping bag. The COE volunteers plan to attend this spring to maintain their portion of the stream.

Carol McIntyre said, “It was nice to be outdoors, spend time with each other outside of our normal office environment, and do something for the community.”

The adoption of the Indian Mill Stream by the College of Education was organized and realized through the efforts of Sarah Sullivan, an environmentally conscious employee at the College’s Student Information and Services Center. If you are interested in adopting a stream, sponsoring a stream adoption, or environmental awareness and educational opportunities in the West Michigan area, please contact the West Michigan Environmental Action Council at (616) 451-3051 or info@wmeac.org.

Sarah Sullivan said, “I thought that it was great that our fellow colleagues were willing to take time from their busy schedules to make a positive impact on the local environment.”

For more information on the Adopt-A-Stream program please visit http://www.wmeac.org/programadopt.shtml.