



National Wildlife Federation®
CAMPUS
ecology®

Wilbur Wright College
Chicago, Illinois
Greening and Environmental Awareness

SCHOOL

Wilbur Wright College - one of the City Colleges of Chicago is a public urban-based community college serving more than 20,000 credit, continuing, and adult education students.

ABSTRACT

Wilbur Wright College assumes a leading role in raising environmental awareness and greening on Campus by incorporating different activities and projects, including Earth Day Celebration, establishing an arboretum and maintaining three native gardens on Campus. Wright College is a pioneer in establishing beehives and a green roof on campus in urban settings. All activities and projects are orientated toward campus sustainability together with student engagement and community involvement. Our spending on these projects was kept at a minimum because of the volunteer work completed by our students, faculty, and staff and also because of the generous donations from our partners.

For establishing the green roof we spent \$5000 and saved about 25% of the total cost thanks to our volunteers. For the Earth Day Celebration we spent \$ 990 and saved about \$2,400 by using volunteers. We didn't spend any money for establishing beehives on campus, thanks to our partners from North Lawndale Employment Network. (We expect to make a profit from the honey we produced.)

The leadership of the Environmental Technology Program and the Campus management of the school, in particular the president of Wright College Dr. Guengerich, has marked significant growth in sustainability for the past year. The NWF's Campus Ecology program has provided important resources, ideas, and educational support along with stakeholders and partners with whom we have coordinated in the past years.

GOALS AND OUTCOMES

Goals

Last year was remarkable with installing beehives, and a green roof, greening the campus, and raising environmental awareness. Our goals are to expand our resources and to serve as an example for campus sustainability and greening with student and community involvement. In the future we will continue with our greening efforts and work toward even more students and community involvement.

Accomplishments and Outcomes

- Our green roof was installed on the roof of the Science Building with the volunteer work of students from Environmental Biology, Architecture Program and Building Energy Technology. The project was generously funded by a grant received from the Chicago Department of Environment. Our contractor for the project was Tecta America / Anthony Roofing. They provided a 60 minute classroom session on green roof design for our students prior to the installation. Chisty Webber Landscapes has donated a number of sedum plugs to the project which

allowed us to expand the size of the green roof. Our great thanks to both of them for this development.

- New native species of trees are planted each year on campus. The total number of trees on campus is 595. All of our trees are identified and labeled with their scientific and common name. Our Arboretum will be used to develop a service –learning project for our students in the Biology Department.
- In expanding our greening efforts we installed beehives on campus with collaboration from The North Lawndale Employment Network. Bees are an integral part of our environment and contribute not only with honey production but most importantly with plants’ pollination. Bees on campus remind students and community about their significant role for our existence.
- Wright College has three native gardens on campus established with the cooperation of Openlands, Clean Air Counts, and NWF. Native plants are important in showing the College’s concern for the environment, restoring some of the original appearance of the campus, providing an opportunity for everyone in the community to learn about native plants, supporting biodiversity, reducing the use of pesticides and fertilizers, better handling of storm water, and providing an opportunity for students to get hands on experience with native plants.
- The Earth Day Celebration, managed by the Environmental Technology Program and the student led Environmental Club, has grown to include local sustainable businesses, community members, technology demonstrations, web and video broadcasts, and registered attendance of over 500 attendees. Earth Day Celebration educates in an environmentally friendly behavior, and teaches students and community to recycle, and to be environmentally responsible citizens.

ENGAGEMENT AND SUPPORT

Leaders and Supporters

Many of these achievements have been made possible by personal individual efforts and partnerships with other organizations and stakeholders. City Colleges of Chicago has had limited availability to discretionary financial resources during this period. However, a shared mission of becoming a model for sustainability has taken hold at Wilbur Wright College from top management, through staff and faculty, to the student population. This has resulted in the planning, execution, and achievement of these projects and program goals.

Funding and Resources

While Wright utilized some internal district resources and program revenues to sustain these goals, additional funding for many of these projects and programs had to be obtained from outside sources like Chicago Department of Environment and partners with whom we’ve coordinated for both infrastructure and educational opportunities.

Education and Community Outreach

Our students were instructed and learned about intensive green roof installation from professionals in the field. Earth Day Celebration has a huge impact on raising environmental awareness and educating students and community on how to save water, recycle, and live a more sustainable life with less negative impact on environment. Students, faculty, and staff attended several Campus Ecology webinars and learned about campus sustainability and student leadership.

National Wildlife Federation's Campus Ecology Program. The NWF's Campus Ecology program has provided important resources, ideas, and context for these achievements, along with the many stakeholders and partners with whom we've coordinated in the past years.

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