Alice Coyne

WASTE ACTION WEEK

Alice educated her co-workers about proper waste disposal, empowering them to make a difference by choosing the right bin: landfill, recycling, or compost. Her office building had great waste management infrastructure in place already, but people weren't comfortable using it. To address this issue, she organized a task force of colleagues who then planned an awareness week to launch their "Know Before You Throw" campaign, piggybacking on pre-existing events, offering prizes, and ensuring that no one had to go out of their way to learn. In total, 600 people were impacted by this campaign.
Allison worked with 6 female inmates at Cook County Jail to plant a butterfly garden. None of these women had ever gardened and were eager to develop new skills. She taught them about the importance of pollinators, about the decline of native bee and butterfly populations, and how we can help with careful plant selection. They added 6 new plants to the existing garden to attract a variety of pollinators: all perennial, either native or suited for the region, low maintenance, and with low watering needs. Everyone worked together to clean up the site, weed, and prep the area, and were happy to follow directions and get dirty.
Amy conducted an energy efficiency workshop for a group of 17 students in a Life Skills class at Ray Graham Training Center. They discussed the importance of energy efficiency in terms of energy and monetary savings. They also discussed the benefits of behavior modification and incorporating energy efficient products in the home to conserve energy and save money.
Angelisa hosted a party for her 13-unit condo building to share information about energy savings available through ComEd. After having ComEd do the assessment for her home, building inhabitants were invited to a party in April in her home to see the changes in person - how the LED bulbs were warm and inviting and could still be dimmed, how the Nest thermostat integrated into her home, etc. She also presented information about the Energy Assessment program and others from ComEd, then shared bills from before and after to show how they were now saving as much as $30 per month. Participants were able to choose to take home an LED bulb or power strip for attending.
Ashley created a game to teach residents of the 47th ward about recycling. To create the game, she highlighted 50 common household items, many of which are commonly thought to be recyclable but are not. She focused on checking your plastics for numbers, recycling all unsoiled papers and cardboard, and keeping bags out of the recycling bin. She launched her kid- and adult-friendly game at a local block party and offered prizes for participation, including water bottles to encourage reduced use of plastic bottles and canvas bags to encourage reduced use of disposable shopping bags.
Bejeray worked with National Honor Society students at Epic Academy High school to pick up 500 pounds of trash in their neighborhood. A few students went door to door passing out flyers about recycling to raise greater awareness of environmental issues in the community. Excitingly, Gregory Mitchill (the local alderman) joined the students and charged them with continuing to grow their impact.
Caitlin Donato
WASTE REDUCTION WORKSHOP

Caitlin hosted a workshop for her co-workers on how to reduce waste and properly recycle in their office building and in their apartments across Chicago. She partnered with the Chicago Recycling Coalition who offered a presentation at the workshop. Participants were able to increase their recycling knowledge, as proven by their 11% increase in knowledge between their pre-workshop and post-workshop quizzes.
Carol partnered with the 47th Ward and Montrose Metra Community Garden to teach attendees about worm composting. She talked about the amount of food waste in our landfills and how we can impact that by vermicomposting. Her display shared some facts about our landfills, the amount of food that ends up there, and how we can help. Her worm bin was displayed and several attendees were curious...the kids, especially, wanted to hold the worms!
Cheryl partnered with Charmer's Cafe in Jarvis Square to conduct a survey of more than 65 customers regarding their behaviors as they pertain to carry out containers. Participants completed a waste reduction questionnaire before drawing for a chance to win a reusable to-go cup or set of reusable straws. The overall project goal was to reduce restaurant non-compostable waste and to raise customer awareness regarding personal behavioral alternatives to accepting traditional to-go restaurant containers; hopefully, the data collected will inform Charmer's choices and Cheryl will have sparked meaningful conversations throughout the local business community.
Deloris designed an Annual Community Bike Ride, to further increase biking, walking, pedestrian safety, and tourism in the Riverdale community on Chicago's far south side. This annual event engages & introduces residents to current wellness initiatives, stewardship & volunteer opportunities, as well as sustainable ideas that will ultimately better their quality of life. More than 75 riders participated as well as more than a dozen partners.
Jason worked with local youth in Englewood to raise awareness about skateboarding as an alternative means of transportation. He also taught these youth how to reuse paper for creative projects. Overall, his goal was to engage local residents in sustainability topics through casual drop-by experiences, increasing accessibility to environmental knowledge and action. He engaged more than 30 local residents in his endeavors.
Jennifer educated Green City Market farmer's market visitors on how to compost and promoted WasteNot as an option for home pick-up composting. She developed and led a fun sorting activity to help reinforce messages regarding what could and could not be composted and raffled off a year's worth of WasteNot's services to one lucky attendee.
Jessica Klinge

GARY COMER YOUTH CENTER
WEATHERIZATION WORKSHOP

Jessica participated in Gary Comer Youth Center's Family night by hosting a workshop about home weatherization, providing weatherization kits for 25 Grand Crossing families and residents.
John and the Ravenswood Greens neighbors group held an event to promote water conservation and to share information from the Center for Neighborhood Technology about their RainReady program. This workshop was a part of a series and led up specifically to the planting of a rain garden in the community.
John and the Ravenswood Greens kicked off a series of monthly workshops (April through October 2018) with this event at which they promoted organic and environmentally friendly food growing practices. Growing your own food can reduce waste from packaging, reduce pollution since it doesn't have to be shipped, and can guarantee that it is environmentally friendly since you have complete control of the process. The workshop featured speakers from the Lincoln and Garfield Park Conservatories and the Montrose Metra Community Garden and boasted more than 20 attendees.
Joseph led a seed starting workshop using recycled materials as planters. Participants of the workshop learned the basics of seed starting and were also able to connect with local gardening options so they could see their plants through from start to finish. More than 50 people from the WCFW Block Club in Uptown participated as a part of their annual Clean Up Green Up Event and it was so successful that Joseph has already been invited back again to present at this year's event.
Judy led a "decorate a canvas bag" drop-by project at the GIPNA (Greater Independence Park Neighborhood Association) sponsored farmer's market. While the kids were decorating their bags, Judy chatted with the parents about recycling and using canvas and other reusable bags instead of plastic for the market and other shopping excursions. She also distributed helpful blue cart recycling tips and LED bulbs to market goers. She reached more than 100 attendees.
Kassie partnered with Plant Chicago and Davis Square Park (43rd and Marshfield) to host an Earth Day themed community clean-up and resource fair. Not only were they able to clean up the park and surrounding neighborhood, but they also provided participants with information on how to compost, recycle, creatively reuse items, and where to find locally sourced, affordable food. More than 150 people participated.
Kathleen's event began with a seminar led by Imagine Englewood If’s (IEI) Lead Poisoning Prevention (LPP) team, presenting information on the dangers of lead poisoning and how to check for lead and prevent lead poisoning in homes. Guests were given an opportunity to sign up for free home lead testing. A health expert ran a food demonstration with nutritional information for how to reduce blood lead levels through a plant-based diet. A Black History Month/Lead Poisoning word search was completed with the kids, vegan meals were served, and all of the flatware and food scraps were composted.
Katie's project was a green cleaning workshop during a regularly scheduled all-girls book club meeting. She set up work stations with all of the materials (spray bottles, baking soda, detergent and oils) and instructed all the girls how to make their green cleaning solution. Everyone left with a bottle of green cleaner, a guide on other daily clean living ideas, and a Nature Museum tote.
Kelly organized a group of 7 co-workers to participate in an environmental sustainability event at the McCormick Bird Sanctuary. In partnership with the Chicago Park District, the group spent the afternoon removing invasive species from the habitat. The group learned about the difference between invasive and native plants and the benefits of choosing to plant native species in their gardens at home. By the end, the group cleared three large contractor bags worth of Queen Anne’s Lace along with several small shrubs and left feeling very satisfied with their contribution to their neighboring community.
Kristen partnered with the Hermosa Neighborhood Association to present on environmentally-friendly practices that also help save money. After talking about energy efficiency, green cleaning, water conservation, and growing your own food, Kristen invited attendees to visit 4 stations to practice skills related to each practice and to take home tools to help them adopt these behaviors in their everyday lives. Not only did Kristen reach the 20 people in attendance, but the event was broadcast on Facebook's Live Feed and had 211 views.
For Kristi's project, she worked with a team of colleagues to bring industrial composting to her office. After researching the company to use, they booked Collective Resource, then launched the project in early October through a staff education session. The program is now running smoothly and they are composting more waste than originally anticipated!
Larken, the Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc. and its Imani Pearls Community Development Foundation hosted a neighborhood festival near 44th and Cottage Grove in Bronzeville. They were able to bond with the community and teach them how to go green in an urban setting. They promoted recycling of all kinds, a variety of composting techniques, biking and making household cleaners that are non-toxic to the environment. They had approximately 60 attendees and 20 volunteers.
Laura collaborated with faculty at James Monroe Elementary to support their annual Earth Day event. She ran an outdoor station at the event where they disseminated information about the benefits of native plant gardening and how it can be a way of managing stormwater and increasing pollinators. At that station, they had a seed starting activity where participants planted seeds in compostable containers to take home.
Leah hosted a green cleaning workshop at her office in the Lyric Opera Building. She opened the workshop with a brief PowerPoint presentation about the environmental and health consequences associated with traditional cleaning products as well as the benefits of "green cleaners." She then provided all of the recipes and necessary materials for the attendees to make their own green cleaners. 17 people attended her workshop and her office now uses homemade green cleaning products.
Lee's kindergarten students learned about and participated in vermicomposting and other waste reducing activities that were introduced in the "Zero Waste" curriculum he developed and implemented over the course of several months. They reused 500+ pages of extra/incorrect copied paper to use for art and are loving their worms (and watching food decompose).
The Evergreen Festival is an event at the Academy for Global Citizenship (where Marney teaches) that celebrates the winter holidays and also sustainability! Historically, the school's parent board brings in local vendors that sell sustainable items (e.g., organic bread; vegan tamales; natural beauty products). This year her project built upon this event, adding two hands-on workshops pertaining to green cleaning and weatherization. Through this project, 24 families made green cleaners and three went home with their own weatherization kits.
Molly Graham

CORPORATE COMPOSTING

Molly held a composting lunch and learn in her office for roughly 20 people. This was the kickoff for renewed use of the office's automatic composter and an effort to prevent it from breaking like it had in the past. She gave a presentation on why composting is important with waste statistics from national and state data and then talked about what types of items could and could not go in the composter.
Nick Lucas

CHICAGO COMPOSTS!

Nick led an informational booth at the 61st Street Farmer's Market on how to get started or improve your composting at home. Through dialogue and educational materials, he provided a wide array of all the composting options available to Chicagoans: vermicomposting how-tos, build your own backyard style, and information on compost pick up services and conventional models you can find at the hardware store. Over 45 people came by to learn from Nick, including composting veterans and folks who had never heard of composting before.
Rachael led a Sustainability Fair in the lobby of the commercial office building that she manages with 1,200 occupants. The fair provided information about green cleaning and invited folks to make their own green cleaning products. She raffled off low-flow shower heads while teaching about water conservation and electricity conservation. Lastly, they discussed composting and their building’s beekeeping and raffled off a composting bin. The event allowed guests to ask questions and learn how to impact their work place and their home communities.
Saxon hosted a booth at the Wicker Park Bucktown Farmer’s Market where he raffled off a one-year subscription of monthly residential composting pickup via WasteNot, Chicago’s only zero-emission composting service. To enter the raffle, one must have correctly disposed of prop waste into the respective cups representing landfill, compost, and recycling. They received 28 raffle entries and had countless conversations about what one can and cannot recycle or compost.
Scott Cummings

SPRING BULBS: PLANTING ENERGY-EFFICIENT LIGHTING IN YOUR HOME

Scott ran a workshop on energy-efficient lighting, with demonstrations and information about light bulb options and related carbon emissions and electricity costs. The goal was for the audience (1) to better understand where their electricity comes from, the associated environmental impact, and the price they pay; and then (2) to take action in their buildings (e.g. incandescent-to-LED bulb swaps) to reduce electrical energy use in order to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and save money (“go green, save green”). Scott continues to engage with these workshop participants via email to offer tips and encouragement.
Scott hosted a display table at the Illinois Science Council's Science Festival and engaged 75 people on the topic of energy-efficient LED lighting, with demonstrations of light bulb types and information about related carbon emissions and electricity costs (“go green, save green”). Most participants took home one LED bulb to try at home along with an information sheet on how to understand LED bulb packaging.
Sean stationed himself at Avers and Belmont to provide information on bike safety through a demonstration, brochures, and one-on-one discussions. As a part of this event, he gave away safety equipment including bike helmets and reflective lights.
Sean hosted a booth at the Portage Park Farmers Market, providing participants with information on what can and can't be disposed of in the Blue Carts. He engaged more than 85 people, including young children and State Representative Mike Quigley. He offered print materials, children's books, and an opportunity for conversation for those interested in learning more about local recycling efforts.
Sony hosted a green cleaning workshop for the 4 houses within Qumbya Housing Cooperative to encourage residents to use non-toxic cleaning products. She called her workshop "Scrubbing Bubbles and Champagne Bubbles" and helped people make their own green cleaners using vinegar, water, and essential oils. Each of the 4 houses now have eco-friendly cleaning products they can use in their common and personal areas.
Sophia brought a group of 15 people to a local beach clean up on Oak Street Beach so they could see the amount of single-use plastic that ends up in our waterways. After the clean up, Sophia led a "Carry Your Cup / "No Straw, Please" workshop at which everyone made a personal pledge to take action: “We pledge to choose better alternatives to single-use plastics in order to reduce the amount of waste entering the landfill and our water systems, and to help improve the health and well-being of the environment.” Sophia passed out glass, metal, and bamboo straws (and cleaning tools), canning jar drinking lids, and reusable coffee cups and tumblers to the attendees.
During an Office Lunch & Learn, employees got together to learn about the environmental, economic and social sustainability around 'Green Cleaning'. As a group, they decoded labels of some conventional cleaning products to gain knowledge of ingredients, made homemade 'Green Cleaning' products, and learned about local vendors who sell 'Green Cleaning' products.
Stef Funk
WE DIG BIO

Stef organized a We Dig Bio event focused on digitizing a portion of the Field Museum’s private collection. Volunteers were recruited and trained to repackage moss samples and digitize/transcribe plant records. The event spanned two days and had a total of 60 volunteers. Over the course of the event, 1126 plant records were transcribed and 804 plant specimens re-housed/re-packed. Midway through each volunteering day, a museum curator brought participants on a private tour of the museum’s collections. Here, volunteers had the opportunity to meet with a scientist, learn about their current research and learn about other opportunities to assist. The actual volunteer hours were considered citizen science, in helping facilitate research projects here in the city, and the tours served as an educational component.
Susan hosted a booth at the WFCW Block Club's annual Clean Up Green Up. At this booth, she discussed green cleaners and helped people learn how to reduce their use of chemical and artificial fragrance irritants by using common safer household ingredients like borax, baking soda, and vinegar. She engaged with 35 residents of the community.
Tonia hosted an event at Willye B. White Field House that educated participants on "Cost Efficient Ways to Stay Connected": sustainable choices for energy conservation that help the planet. They discussed savings on utilities, community solar projects, and alternative transportation. This event engaged 25 people and included representatives from the Active Transportation Alliance, The Recyclery, Elevate Energy, and Citizens Utility Board who shared information to help people make informed decisions.