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SUMMER EXPERIENCE WITH GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE TEAM



Miranda Wertz, joined the OEC Young Adult (YA) program for our summer programs. Here are some of the highlights from her experience on Green Infrastructure team.

Key accomplishments

"The Green Infrastructure Team had a very good summer with our youth and young adults. We maintained rain gardens, bioswales, and city parking lots."



The Green Infrastructure team poses after a hard day of work! Miranda (third from left) hangs out with the crew.

NEWS

Summer2017

At OEC this summer, our crews continue their activity as spring transitioned into a wet summer. Everyone took advantage of the warmer weather to have fun and fulfill tree planting and green infrastructure goals!

Don't miss the chance to catch up with all of the good times OEC has had this season on our [Facebook page!](#)



Fun despite, weather conditions

"We worked in adverse weather conditions; some days hotter than others and some days very wet and rainy. With amazing teamwork we pushed each other through on our toughest jobs. Keeping laughter and fun along with our work still getting each job done efficiently."

Increasing plant knowledge

"Learning new plants and what importance each has, what bugs or animals liked and disliked them. Each person had a favorite plant but it was safe to say everyone disliked thistles. They were the weeds that would poke your hands when you tried to pull them, so it was always best to get really close to the bottom of the stem by the ground and pull."

Positive feedback from community

"The best part of the job for us was being able to educate people in the community with our knowledge we gained; also getting positive feedback from our community young and old thanking us for our work. It's safe to say G.I. crew members enjoyed our summer not just working but learning."

SPECIAL PROJECTS TEAM ACTIVITIES



Special Projects team pose after a hard day of prepping sites and planting trees this summer.

The special projects team worked on many different assignments this summer. Our field team consisted of one supervisor, two young adults, and two youth. We would like to thank our office staff for keeping everything in order as well which helped our days run smoothly.

Special Projects received six work orders from trees over the course of the season and had three joint days with the Green Infrastructure team.

Our big project this summer was working with Eagle Scout Nate Keyes. The Special projects team helped coordinate this day providing tools and volunteers to complete a very ambitious and well turned out Eagle Scout project.

Our team was able to maintain the work completed during this project such as watering plants and keeping the area clean as well as finish up some small plantings after the event day. Our team went above and beyond to maintain all tree pits outside of the vision center all the way to the corner of South Salina and Martin Luther King Blvd. We hope you notice the work we have done and are looking forward to next year.

- Jeanne Mastrandrea

TREE CREW SUMMER UPDATES



The Tree Crew InTREEduces itself!

Greetings from the OEC Tree Crew! Water we doing this year? We have been very busy watering and maintaining all 1003 trees that we planted in the Fall of 2016 and the Spring of 2017!

We were lucky to get a lot of rain during the beginning of the summer this year but as soon as it got dry again we made sure to water all of these trees.

A big thank you to our foot crews who greatly increased our capacity to reach all of the trees by carrying hoses and visiting them on foot. The wet weather allowed us to complete warranty inspections on all 637 trees planted last fall (2016). We sent crews out to inspect and record the condition of each tree, and used this opportunity to prune them and to knock on doors to ask residents to help us care for the trees by adopting them.

This is the first time OEC was involved in doing this sort of study, and the crew really enjoyed it. We also worked with Cornell Cooperative Extension on door-to-door outreach and rental registry calls to get planting site approvals for the fall.

Here is what we accomplished in the field:

- 954 times trees were pruned
 - 1,504 times tree were watered
 - 20 trees were re-mulched
 - 637 trees were formally inspected during the warranty inspections
 - 900+ sets of stakes were removed
 - 757 times trees were weeded
 - 650 doors were knocked on
 - 187 direct contacts were made
 - 593 houses we left literature at
 - 180 approvals for plantable sites were gained
- were gained from Rental Registry calls
35 new tree adopters signed pledges

But that is not all we did. Some of our youth crew members began the season feeling shy about knocking on doors and talking to residents during outreach. With practice, by the end of the season they were able to work through this and go out and talk to people and get planting approvals. It was wonderful to watch their confidence grow! Also, a couple of our young adults who began working at OEC with other ideas about their future plans have decided that they are interested in pursuing careers in urban forestry, which is super exciting!

A big thank you to our crew and all of their hard work as we move forward into fall planting!

- Nick Garty



Salim prunes a tree during tree maintenance at Libba Cotton Park.

CLEAN STREETS CREW 2017

The Clean Street Program is a collaboration between the City of Syracuse Department of Public Works, Bureau of Research and Onondaga Earth Corps.

This year the Clean Streets crew cleaned up litter focusing on target areas along South Geddes and Butternut Streets. Crewmember picked up litter as well as reached out to property owners to sign on to OEC's Clean Streets Pledge. Thirteen new businesses signed on to our pledge which commits businesses to take ownership and provide stewardship for a clean storefront and sidewalk.

We cleaned our target areas a combined eleven times respectively as well as cleaned on other



Knocking on doors during community outreach

...Clean Streets continued.



Top Left: Nate poses in front of one experimental trash can installation.

Right: Parks Crew poses.

priority streets (South Salina, West Street, Park Street, Midland & Castle Street, Garfield Ave, East Fayette Street, Tallman Street, North Salina, Clinton Street, Lodi Street, East Colvin Street & South Ave, East Colvin Street & Midland Ave, South State Street & Raynor Ave., and Brighton Ave. We also picked up litter at Schiller, Leavenworth, Skiddy, and Higher Onondaga Parks.

One summer highlight was hosting a block cleanup in collaboration with three of our business pledges.

Our crew also did an experiment which began with designing trash cans and we then targeted the areas with the most litter to place those trash cans. Trash cans were placed in these areas and we made observations before and after to determine whether or not adding trash cans increased street cleanliness.

We observed that people used the trash cans at the installations and this was an improvement but it became problematic if trash cans were not emptied regularly.

- Maurice Harris & Damian McKenzie

PARKS CREW 2017



The Summer Parks Program is a collaboration between the City of Syracuse Parks Department, Bureau of Research and Onondaga Earth Corps.

This summer the parks crew consisted of 8 youth and 2 crew leaders. Throughout the summer the parks crew went to different parks that were in need and brought them back to life. We started with Kirk Park weeding and picking up litter in the park and surrounding neighborhoods and ended with renovating Monkey Island at Onondaga Park.

Staff and crewmembers taught children at five different parks about the environment. The parks we worked with were Kirk, Schiller, Barry, Dr. Weeks, and Wilson Parks. Each day we went to a different park, on some days we visited two. Our team taught children how to identify trees, what watersheds are and how to protect our community from environmental pollution.

Each day after our lessons were over we would engage in educational games and activities such as recycling relay races, trees save the rain, red light green light and the trash can game. In each park we met with anywhere from 11 to 27 children. The children at these parks were great with participation and seemed to enjoy our programs just as much as our team did teaching them.

- Shaquann Petteway & Marquise Brown-Thornton



Tree Crew is all smiles in this selfie, at the conclusion of a great planting and pruning season through spring and summer.

ABOUT THE ONONDAGA EARTH CORPS

The Onondaga Earth Corps (OEC) is a youth development and employment program for youth ages 15 to 25 living in the City of Syracuse. As youth work on community and environmental service projects, they learn valuable job and life skills, community based problem solving skills, civic engagement, and environmental stewardship and technical skills.

OEC began in 2004 as the Eli MacDonald Green Team, a neighborhood initiative to beautify the community and employ youth. In 2005, the program changed its name to the Onondaga Earth Corps and incorporated the youth conservation corps model. Since then, under the leadership of many community collaborators, the OEC has become a leading force in revitalizing our urban environment through urban forestry, green infrastructure and outreach efforts throughout the City of Syracuse.

DONATE YOUR TIME, TALENT, CAPITAL

Support the work of the Onondaga Earth Corps however suits you best! We are always looking for creative ways to grow our program. YOU CAN HELP! Visit www.onondagaeearthcorps.org for more details.

COMING UP FOR OEC THIS FALL....

- ◇ Ryder Park Community Tree Planting Oct. 14th
- ◇ Oneida Shores Community Tree Planting - Oct. 21st
 - ◇ City of Syracuse Community Tree Planting - Oct 28th
- ◇ Earth Corps Encore 2017 Dinner Nov 4th

THE VISION

- Help youth understand the relationship between people and the urban ecosystem
- Engage youth in hands-on community and environment service learning projects
- Train youth for future jobs and careers in environmental fields
- Empower youth by developing their leadership abilities that help them analyze situations, solve problems and implement strategies to improve their communities.

CONTACT

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