

Sustainability Initiative Newsletter



The NYC DOE
Sustainability Initiative

News

March 7, 2016

A Greenhouse Grows in Brooklyn



M.S./P.S. 84 The Jose De Diego School and NY Sun Works celebrate the opening of a 1,500 sq Rooftop Greenhouse.

On Friday, February 26, parents, teachers and city and state officials arrived at M.S./P.S. 84 in Brooklyn to find students wearing Greenhouse Leader badges escorting them to the roof. They were there to proudly provide guided tours of their new state of the art hydroponic Greenhouse Classroom facility. Students at The Jose De Diego School had been learning and practicing for months on their presentations.

My escort was Katya, a 4th grader at P.S. 84. As we walked up the four flights of stairs, towards the roof of the building, Katya explained to me exactly what is hydroponics, "it's a method of growing plants using mineral nutrient solutions, in water, without soil." she said. When we arrived upstairs to the school's roof, the sun shined through the double glass panels of the greenhouse walls. The greenhouse is a 1524 sq. science lab and urban farm that seats 32 students. In addition, to having hydroponic growing systems, the greenhouse also contains an aquaponics tank, which will be filled with tilapia in order to provide nutrient-rich water for plants, an enclosure full of ladybugs, which are employed as a natural pest control, and an independent water supply via a rainwater collection method. The first of its kind in Brooklyn, the greenhouse represents a landmark initiative by the school's community and NY Sun Works, a non-profit org which



builds innovative science labs in urban schools. Children will learn about the science of sustainability while growing food with cutting edge technology. They will also learn about contamination, pollution, biodi-



Similar programs will be implemented into another dozen schools in the upcoming year. In November 2015, Brooklyn Borough President Eric Adams, unveiled "Growing Brooklyn's Future" an initiative to create hydroponic classrooms in a dozen schools across Brooklyn. "This space represents the needs of the 21st century. We are thinking out of the box, we are rethinking education to prepare the next generation of innovators." Manuel La Zamora, NYSW Executive Director concluded.

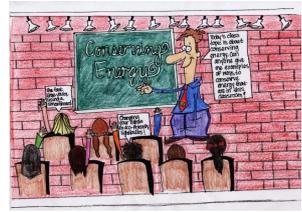
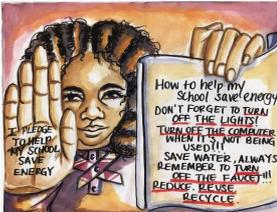


Updates

Sustainability Poster Contest

For the fifth year, NYC DOE is conducting an Energy Conservation Artwork Contest. Students should create a poster with a CALL TO ACTION in regards to energy conservation. This competition is open to all NYC DOE schools from all grade levels (K-12). The goal of the contest is to create a dialogue and encourage students, teachers, administrative staff and parents to save energy through art.

Deadline for submissions is **April 1, 2016**. Check out our [website](#) for more details.



Career Opportunities in the Office of Sustainability

[Zero Waste Coordinator](#)

The Office of Sustainability is seeking 5 Zero Waste Coordinators. Each will provide technical support and guidance on program implementation and operation to DOE staff including custodians, district/central headquarters staff and school administrators in accordance with Chancellor's Regulation A-850 and Local Law 40/41 (Recycling Law.)

[Sustainability Advanced Training](#)

We're please to announce that the next Sustainability Advance Training will be held on Friday, May 27th at the UFT Headquarters. This will be an all event, lunch will be provided. Please mark your calendar! Registration will begin in April. Please be on the look out for an email from the Office of Sustainability regarding registration.

Events

[March is National Nutrition Month and Includes School Breakfast Week](#)

Find [resources](#) for schools and educators and celebrate [National School Breakfast Week](#), March 7-11

Compost at Greenmarkets

Help promote organics diversion for composting in New York City at select Greenmarkets. Every week, food scraps are collected from neighborhood residents and transported to local compost sites for processing. Volunteers are needed to help Compost Coordinators manage busy food scrap drop-off locations. Sign up [here](#) for one or more events.

March 5 - Compost 101— 10am to noon

Join the NYC Compost Project to learn how to reduce your waste and create "black gold" for your garden by composting leaves, kitchen scraps, garden trimmings and weeds. This workshop covers the essentials of outdoor composting in an urban setting. Register [here](#).

March 10 - Workshop: Garden - 4:30pm to 6:30pm

Join Edible SchoolYard for this free workshop that will show you how to plan an educational garden space. This event is open to all educators. Learn more and [register here](#).

Stop 'N' Swap

Stop 'N' Swap is a free community reuse event in which the public may drop off reusable and portable items for others to take home. Volunteers help receive, sort, and display items at these events. Breakfast and lunch will be provided. Sign up for one or more:

Saturday, March 5 - Staten Island
10:45am-4:30pm, Christ Church New Brighton
76 Franklin Ave ([map](#)) ([sign up](#))

Saturday, March 12 - Elmhurst
10:45am-4:30pm, P.S. 13 Clement C Moore
5501 94th St, Queens ([map](#)) ([sign up](#))

March 11 - Catskills Youth Climate Summit, Delaware Academy, Delhi, NY - 8:30am to 2:30pm

The Catskills Youth Climate Summit is a powerful vehicle for inspiration, learning, community engagement and youth leadership development. For more information, [click here](#). Register [here](#).

March 19 - Hot Compost – 10am to noon

Take your composting to the next level at this hands-on workshop! Learn to make and manage a "thermophilic" batch of compost—a pile that will heat up to kill weed seeds and pathogens, ready to use in as little as three months! Participants work together with NYC Compost Project staff to build a pile at our compost demo site. Come ready to get dirty! [Register here](#).

March 19 – NY Health and Sustainability Learning Expo – 10am –2pm

This is a day of fun & learning for kids and adults, showcasing businesses that support actions which teach children to be ambassadors of healthy living & sustainability. This event is to be held at the Marriot Brooklyn Bridge, 333 Adams St Brooklyn NY 11201. [Click here](#) to learn more.

March 23 - "Go Green Night" at P.S. 229Q - 6pm to 8pm

This night is a celebration of sustainability for staff, students, and parents. There will be a variety of activities for all attendees to participate in such as, games, science projects, and a planting station. If you'd like to attend, please contact Corinne Caballero at ccaball@schools.nyc.gov to RSVP.

March 24 - Workshop: All About Planting - 4:30pm to 6:30pm

Dig in to the basics of planting, both indoors and outside. In this free two-hour workshop, you'll learn techniques to engage students in planting activities, such as seed starts, plant starts, and transplanting. Explore Edible Schoolyard NYC's lessons that focus on planting while remaining rooted in academic context, such as environmental science as it relates to plant growth, the parts of plants that we eat, and photosynthesis. To attend this workshop you must [register here](#). This event is open to all educators.

March 24 - STEM Resources: Sustainability Coordinator Gathering - 4pm to 6pm

Join NYC Eco-Schools and GrowNYC Recycling Champions at NYC Eco-School and Recycling Champions school P.S. 16R (80 Monroe Avenue, Staten Island) for a special [STEM-focused Sustainability Coordinator Gathering!](#) Come and hear from our guest about their STEM-focused program offerings for students and their outlook on the future of STEM education in New York City:

March 31- Workshop: Cooking with Kids 101 - 4:30 to 6:30

In this free two-hour workshop, you'll learn how to set up your classroom for safe, fun, and educational cooking activities with your students. What equipment do you need and what can you do without? How can kids use knives and heat safely? Practice some of Edible Schoolyard NYC's teaching techniques by cooking a seasonal recipe with the class. To attend this workshop you must [register here](#). This event is open to all educators.

March 31– April 1—Green Schools Conference & Expo—Pittsburgh, PA

The Green Schools Conference & Expo brings together green schools thought leaders and champions, connecting educators, school administrators, elected officials, and nonprofit and corporate partners to advance the shared mission of green schools for all. [Register here](#).

April 30 - Spring Soil Health - 10am to noon

Spring is here and it's time to prep for the upcoming growing season! Join QBG Farm staff to learn how to grow healthy plants and care for your soil. We'll discuss soil testing, cover crops, compost application, and growing season planning tips. [Register here](#).

May 13-14 - 4th Annual International Young Environmentalist Youth Summit (IYEYS)

Join over 140 young environmentalists at the IYEYS. Powered by Greening Forward, the IYEYS is a conference by the youth for the youth who aspire to start global organizations. This conference will equip students with the leadership skills necessary for them to create campaigns that will reduce waste, address climate change, advocate for green and wild spaces, and more. Want to know more? [Click here](#)

May 14 - Compost Tea and Cookies— 10am to noon

This advanced composting class will show participants how to make a batch of compost tea; an aerated brew of finished compost in water. Making actively aerated compost tea creates an explosion of beneficial bacteria and fungi found in compost. Compost tea can be applied to plants as a foliar spray or soil soak. Come enjoy tea and (edible!) cookies with us in this informative session. [Register here](#).

June 26 - July 2 - [Student Climate & Conservation Congress](#) - Applications Now Open - Students (and a limited number of faculty or staff) are invited to apply to become U.S. Green School Fellows and participate in the 2015 Sc3 Congress. Sc3 empowers outstanding high school students, entering 9th to 12th grade next fall, with the skills, knowledge and tools necessary to address climate and conservation challenges and better serve their schools and communities. [Apply](#) or [Nominate](#) today!

Opportunities



Bring Green Design Lab to your school!

Solar One offers direct delivery programs for NYC schools! Solar One Educators can visit up to 4 classes per day for 1-6 sessions delivering hands on activities such as designing wind turbines, building batteries, testing water quality, and more! You can mix and match activities from the Energy, Water, Materials, Air, or Food Units to meet the needs of your classes. All workshops include materials for hands on projects. After school programming and field trips are also available. To learn more [click here](#).

EPA now accepting applications for locally-focused EE projects

The application period for the 2016 Environmental Education (EE) Grants Program is now open! EPA is looking to support locally-focused EE projects that increase public awareness and knowledge about environmental issues. Projects should promote environmental stewardship and help develop informed, knowledgeable and responsible citizens in the community(ies) in which the project is located. Applications are due by **April 8, 2016, 11:59 p.m.** Eastern Time. To learn more and register visit www.epa.gov

Plastic Bag and Film Recycling

As much as we work to reduce our use of plastic bags, and reuse them for cleaning up after the dog, collecting non-recyclables for the tiny trash chutes, etc., recycling can be a helpful option. Many retail stores provide recycling bins to turn old bags into composite lumber, bags, containers, crates, pallets, and pipes. Check out Plasticfilmrecycling.org to find a retail store near you that accept clean, dry plastic bags and film.

Water, Energy and Waste: Integrating Themes of Sustainability into your Classroom.

This course offers K-8 science and classroom teachers the unique opportunity to delve deeper into global environmental issues on a local level. Situated within the novel setting of a NY Sun Works sustainable rooftop hydroponic urban farm/Greenhouse Classroom, this course allows teachers to learn more about current environmental concerns through a blend of technology, discussion, and engaging hands-on projects.

March 6 - April 16 2016 Saturdays 8:30am - 3:30pm
Participants will receive 3 PD credits for the course, To apply go to the current [ASPDP course catalog](#).

Schoolyard Habitats

To help reconnect today's children to the outdoors, [National Wildlife Federation](#) assists schools in developing Schoolyard Habitat outdoor classrooms where educators and students learn how to attract and support local wildlife. These wildlife habitats become places where students not only learn about wildlife species and ecosystems, but also outdoor classrooms where they hone their academic skills and nurture their innate curiosity and creativity. To learn more, [click here](#).

The Green Strides Webinar Series

The Green Strides Webinar Series promotes sessions offered by federal agencies and nonprofit organizations that provide free tools to reduce schools' environmental impact and costs; improve health and wellness; and teach effective environmental education. Check out the [webinar calendar](#) for upcoming webinars.

NWF's Young Reporters for the Environment National Competition

Youth between the ages of 13 and 21 are invited to participate in NWF's Young Reporters for the Environment national competition. Participants investigate an environmental issue and report on it in writing, photography, or video. Entries must be relevant to participants' local community, connect to a global perspective, include possible solutions, and be disseminated to an appropriate target audience. First place winners in each category will continue to the international competition. Submissions are **due by Tuesday, March 15, 2016, 5 P.M. EST**. To learn more [click here!](#)

GrowNYC's 2016 Annual Spring Plant Sale

Every year, GrowNYC holds their [Annual Spring Plant Sale](#) in order to provide community groups with affordable perennial and annual flowering plants, herbs, ground covers, and vegetables grown by Greenmarket farmers and sold in wholesale quantities. Plants are for neighborhood open space projects only (e.g. community gardens, schools, block associations, churches, etc.) and may be sold to raise other funds.

GrowNYC offers an [online order form](#) and strongly prefers that you use it to submit your order. Orders are due by **Friday April 1st**.

DNA Science Camp at the Harlem DNA Lab

Encourage your students to attend this STEM Enrichment Program during Spring Break!

Interested in molecular genetics and modern biotechnology? Wish you had more time in the lab at school? Want to learn more about DNA? Apply now to attend DNA Science Camp at the [Harlem DNA Lab](#) during Spring Break! DNA Science Camp provides extensive lab experience with the basic techniques of recombinant DNA, including DNA restriction and ligation, bacterial transformation, and plasmid isolation. Campers will perform the entire lab sequence from the popular DNA Science text and will receive their own copy of the text to keep. Students in grades 9-12 who successfully completed Living Environment are eligible to apply.

[Click here](#) for more information and to apply.

Carton 2 Garden Contest

This contest highlights students' creativity by repurposing milk and juice cartons from the cafeteria to either build or enhance a school garden. Educators engage students in a hands-on experience creating teachable moments on environmental stewardship, sustainability and living healthy. The best use of cartons in the school garden can win a prize valued up to \$2,500 for building or enhancing the garden. Contest **submissions are due April 13** so get [registered today](#) for your entry kit and start planning!

Free Professional Development

The Office of School Wellness is offering free Professional Development (PD) throughout the 2015-16 school year. Check out the Office of School Wellness [online catalog here](#). Create your own professional development plan and make it part of wider school wellness action plans.

2016 Water Resources Art & Poetry Contest

DEP's 30th Annual Water Resources Art & Poetry Contest: Second through 12th grade students from New York City and watershed schools are invited to submit artwork (including media such as paintings, photos, digital art, videos) and poetry that creatively express knowledge, appreciation and understanding of New York's valuable shared water resources. Visit the DEP website to view [contest guidelines](#), learn about New York City's water resources and the STEM connection, register and submit entries online, and see past winners' art and poetry. The deadline for submitting entries to DEP is **March 4, 2016**.

Oysters, Alewife and Eels... Oh My! Contest

The Bronx River Alliance is looking for creative students to illustrate the cover artwork for the new Bronx River Aquatic Wildlife Monitoring How-To-Guide created by NYC Parks Natural Resources Group. Deadline **May 24, 2016**

Check out more of the Contest details [here!](#)

Pure Food Kids offers FREE food education workshops for 4th and 5th grade students in the Seattle & New York City metro areas. In the workshops, kids learn to become Food Detectives through label reading and cooking. They leave the workshop ready to make savvy food decisions for themselves and their families.

To schedule a workshop, click here or visit www.purefoodkids.org

Resources

Teaching Resources

[TurfMutt: Saving the Planet One Yard at a Time](#) - TurfMutt is a science-based program featuring standards-aligned curriculum that teaches students how things grow, the value of personal and community green spaces, and how to tend to them in a sustainable way.

New [Scholastic Every Kid in the Park materials](#) are now available! Designed for both teachers and parents to help educate students on the benefits, purpose and value of federal lands and waters with materials that connect with topics areas in English, Language Arts, Social Studies and Science.

[Fresh and Salt Water Curriculum](#) - for teachers of grades 5-10, this free, downloadable curriculum provides an interdisciplinary approach to understanding Great Lakes and ocean literacy principles.

[Investi-gator Science Journal](#) - this journal is for upper elementary level students. The journal focuses on contemporary, Forest Service research and is written in the format of a scientific article. Receive [free copies](#) for your class.

[FIRST LEGO League TRASH TREK Challenge](#) - teams of up to 10 students will choose and solve a real-world trash problem as their Project. Teams will also build, test, and program an autonomous robot using LEGO® MINDSTORMS® technology to solve a series of sustainability-themed missions.

School Garden Seeds Donation

Peaceful Valley Farm & Garden Supply's School Garden Program is currently taking applications! They will be giving out several hundred seed boxes to school gardens on a first come, first serve basis! Each seed box donation will include a wide assortment of certified organic, non-GMO Peaceful Valley brand seed packs. To apply, completed this [application](#).

National Grants for Educators

Let It Grow Contest & Grant

The Nutrients for Life Foundation provides information and resources to educators and the public about the vital role fertilizers play in feeding our world. The Foundation's "Let It Grow Contest" invites teachers and community adults to vote daily for a school of their choice to win a \$5,000 agricultural grant, Nutrients For Life Foundation prize pack and more. Deadline: **March 7, 2016**

Kars4Kids Small Grant Program

The Kars4Kids Small Grant Program is dedicated to supporting educational initiatives around the world. They accept submissions directly from organizations and from individuals on behalf of charities they recommend. Grants typically range from \$500-\$2,000

EcoTech Grants

The Captain Planet Foundation is awarding 17 grants of \$2,500 each to schools or non-profit organizations for the purpose of engaging children in inquiry-based projects in STEM. Apply by **March 15, 2016**.

Braitmayer Foundation Grant

Funds a broad range of K-12 education programs, with particular interest in curricular and school reform initiatives and professional development opportunities for teachers. Grants up to \$35,000. Apply by **March 15, 2016**.

Ezra Jack Keats Mini-Grants

The Ezra Jack Keats Foundation is accepting applications from public schools and public libraries for \$500 mini-grants to fund projects that foster creative expression, working together and interaction with a diverse community. Applications due **March 31, 2016**.

Action for Healthy Kids Game On Grant

Grants ranging from \$500 to \$2,500 will be awarded to around 500 schools to support physical activity and nutrition initiatives. Apply by **April 1, 2016**.

ECO Classroom Teacher Workshop in Costa Rica

Teams of middle and high school life science teachers are invited to apply for this two-week field experience at the La Selva Biological Station in Costa Rica. Apply by **April 8, 2016**.

Dorothy Stout Professional Development Grants

Grants of \$750 are awarded to K-12 teachers to support participation in Earth science classes or workshops. Apply by **April 15, 2016**.

U.S. Stockholm Junior Water Prize

for students in grade 9-12, \$10,000. Deadline **April 15, 2016**

Young Scientist Challenge

for students in grade 5-8, \$25,000. Deadline **April 20, 2016**

The Presidential Awards for Excellence in Mathematics and Science Teaching (PAEMST)

These awards are the nation's highest honors for K-12 teachers of mathematics and science. Since 1983, more than 4,400 teachers have been recognized for their contributions in the classroom and to their profession. The deadline for nominations is **April 1, 2016** and the deadline for applications is **May 1, 2016**.

National Competitions & Contest

BioenergizeME Infographic Challenge

What is biomass? Where does biomass come from? How are biofuels made? What is bioenergy? High school students are invited to participate in this contest from the U.S. Department of Energy to explore these questions and learn about how bioenergy affects them. Submissions due March 4, 2016.

Lemelson-MIT InvenTeam Grant Competition

InvenTeams composed of high school students, teachers and mentors are asked to collaboratively identify a problem that they want to solve, research the problem, and then develop a prototype invention as an in-class or extracurricular project. The maximum grant award is \$10,000. Deadline: **March 7, 2016**

Trash Talk



Textbook Recycling Program

This program allows schools to dispose of and recycle obsolete soft and hardcover books. Container/bin drop off and pick up is coordinated by the Office of Sustainability. These containers/bins are specifically for Text Book Recycling. Therefore, schools who request a container/bin from Text Book Recycling

Program must ONLY put outdated text books into these containers/bins.

We suggest you coordinate with your school's staff a proper location of these containers/bins, with signage indicating that these containers/bins are for text books only.

Should you have any questions about which materials can be placed in these containers/bins or have large quantities, please contact the Office of Sustainability's Waste Coordinator, Liz Colon at (718) 610-0350 or ecolon@schools.nyc.gov.

With everyone's participation, I am confident that we can do our part to help New York City achieve the sustainability goals set forth in by Mayor de Blasio.

Contact Us

Office of Sustainability, Division of School Facilities

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