

Green Fund Project Final Report

This report may be published on the SIU sustainability website.

Project Title: Environmental education outreach graduate assistant for Education in Motion program

Project ID #: 16SP101

Award Date: 4/22/2016

Completion Award:

Total Funds Used: \$7000

1. Please provide a write up of your project/project experience.

This graduate assistantship position allowed Touch of Nature Environmental Education to provide outreach in the form of: phone calls, conferences, e-mails, face-to-face meetings, and school visits to teachers, parents and administration of various public and private school districts across the Southern Illinois region.

In the Education in Motion program, I was able to visit schools to promote Touch of Nature field trips as a vital component to K-12 education. An important part of this position was encouraging teachers to write the Illinois Department of Natural Resources (IDNR) Biodiversity Grant which funds outdoor environmental education field trips for public schools in Illinois.

2. Please provide a summary of your results (environmental, social, and/or economic) including quantifiable data as appropriate (ex. # of individuals reached, lbs. diverted from landfill, energy saved, etc.).

In total, 10 IDNR grants were awarded during the second year of the Green Fund grant, a direct result of the recruitment and outreach work from this assistantship.

Since the Green Fund grant was initially awarded in 2015 and the school outreach program began, the IDNR Biodiversity Grant awarded \$10,351 to schools throughout the region for field trips to Touch of Nature, serving a total of 650 school children. At this point, there are still schools that received the Biodiversity Grant for Touch of Nature that have not visited yet, and are planning to visit in the Fall. Following is a listing of the schools, dates of visit, amount of money granted, and number of school children per trip.

2015

Central Consolidated High School 10/26 \$300 / 25 students

Unity Point School 11/6 \$274 / 73

2016

Centralia Junior High School 4/22 \$1002 / 42

Coulterville School 4/28 \$510 / 34

Harrisburg – Eastside Intermediate School 5/13 and 5/23 \$1680 / 92

Murphysboro High School Zoology Club 12/15 \$250 / 9

Harrisburg – Eastside Intermediate School 10/13 \$690 / 44

2017

Central Consolidated High School 4/27/2017 \$750 / 33

Centralia Junior High School 4/28 \$900 / 35

Richland Middle School 5/2-5/3 \$2265 / 146

Desoto Elementary School 5/5 \$195 / 13

Trinity Christian School 5/9 \$80 / 14

Harrisburg Eastside Intermediate School 5/11 – 12 \$1455 / 90

Grand total: \$10,351

students: 650

- 3. Summarize how your project promoted the Green Fee/Sustainability on campus including, but not limited to, flyers created, screenshots of website, signage, etc. Please include website links, if applicable.**

Each time I traveled to deliver a workshop in schools, I mentioned Touch of Nature as a component of SIU and sustainability, as well as promoting to others that I talked with that my position was made possible by the Green Fund.

- 4. Is there anything you would do differently if you were to do a similar project in the future? If so, please describe.**

Many of the duties in this funded graduate position evolved throughout the year. In the Fall, the work was focused was on contacting new teachers, introducing them to field trip programming options and urging them to apply for the Biodiversity grant. Much of the time was comprised of Education in Motion, where I visited schools and provided short-form introductory programming at no cost to the school. While the exposure and experience for students and teachers helped, I found that the most effective way to forge a relationship with teachers was to set up face-to-face meetings where I could sit down and walk them through the grant writing process.

In the future, I would shift the position duties away from the Education in Motion outreach student targeted programming and spend more time face-to-face with teachers, as this resulted in more positive relationships and more engagement in Touch of Nature as a long-term annual field trip option. I would also recommend that the outreach position includes scheduled meetings with school boards in Southern Illinois to present on the importance of environmental and experiential education and the opportunities Touch of Nature provides.

5. Please attach a minimum of 5 digital images –these will be images used to promote interest in sustainability projects on campus. These can be photos of the progress of the project or the completed project.





