

SIU Sustainability Council Project

Final Report

Project Information

Project Title	Permaculture Demonstration Site: A Food Forest for SIUC
Project I.D. #	110316
Award Date	May 16, 2011
Completion Date	May 7, 2012
Funds used	\$390.00

Qualitative Assessment and Feedback

Please provide a brief description of the project and your experience.
This project was to install a Permaculture Demonstration Site at SIU's Sustainability Center. My experience, after doing a 2 semester independent study on this subject as well, is that people practicing permaculture are doing some of the most important work in the world. It is amazing that SIU now has a site that is demonstrating these principles as well. The project was much harder than expected, but my team and myself learned more than expected as well. I will attach a document that will further explain this project and background on permaculture for anyone who is interested.

What were the best things learned/produced from the project?
The best things learned about this project were how to take an idea and make it reality. We learned how to take something that we read about and actually do it. We learned the intricacies involved in making a site like this and also came to understand, again, how much work it takes to start projects such as these. We learned how to work as a team and use the resources we have at hand. We produced the beginnings of SIU's forest garden, which are gaining popularity across the country.

How do you define sustainability? In what way did this project confirm or challenge your ideas?
I define sustainability as something that we aspire to but may never attain. I define sustainability as a culture, society, and actions that can exist without having such detrimental effects that other generations have nothing left. I define it as something that can exist for eternity. I define sustainability as what we see in nature. Nature, to me, is the only true sustainable system. This project made me think about my goals in sustainability and made me consider what is sustainable for me. It made me understand that although I may aspire to create many things and do many projects in my life to help people learn how they can be more sustainable, that I must be sustainable in taking care of myself as well. We cannot expect to be sustainable in anything unless we take a step back and take care of ourselves as well. This project, mostly, helped me to understand the benefits of using nature as a guide for sustainability, and to use biological resources as much as possible in our quest for agricultural sustainability. This project confirmed my ideas that sustainability is a long way off, yet it is still something we should strive to attain.

Where would you like to see this project, or projects like it, go in the future?
I would like to see this project grow and expand in the future and become a fully functioning, beautiful, well-known demonstration site. I would like people to come to our site to learn about a different way of growing food, one that involves listening to nature and working with it instead of the

opposite.

Do you have plans for continued involvement in such work? If so, how did this project contribute to those plans?

Yes, I have plans for continued involvement in this work. I will always work to create gardens, wherever I go, and I will now always follow the permaculture principles and design elements to create my gardens. This project contributed to my plans by showing me the real benefits of this work and its importance. I would like to someday create urban gardens showcasing what permaculture principles can bring to our society and world.

Optional: Do you have any suggestions or ideas for the SIU Sustainability Council?

This, I think, is the most important thing SIU has going for it. The future is definitely going to be green, and this project offers students opportunities to put learning into action about sustainability. It is very, very important for us to learn real world skills. We are inheriting a sometimes scary world, and without skills for action we are going to be in trouble. I would suggest the Sustainability Council participate in more outreach activities and let people know about its work.

Please attach at least 5 images of your project. Make sure that at least one of these includes a picture of you with your project and, if applicable, your team. These images may appear on the Sustainability Council website to help inspire future projects and to promote sustainability at SIU Carbondale.

















