

SIU Sustainability Council Project
Final Report

Project title: SolarDok Picnic Table
Project I.D. #: 101202
Award date: Fall 2013
Completion date: April 24, 2014
Funds used (if different from award amount): Full

Brief write up of project/project experience (not to exceed 250 words):

CARBONDALE -- Students walking on SIU's campus this week may have noticed a new, high-tech looking picnic table. The Solar Dok picnic table, installed Thursday west of Morris Library near Lindegren Hall, gives students the ability to charge electronic devices at a solar-powered charging station.

Made of recycled plastics, the table is entirely "green" and comes equipped with an umbrella, four seats, a solar array, a 110-volt charger, a display box and two USB ports. EnerFusion, a Michigan-based company, produces the tables at a cost of a little more than \$10,000 apiece. A solar solstice, which provides solar-powered charging capabilities without the picnic table, is also being installed across from the student center at a cost of \$3,000.

The table and solstice were funded entirely by the SIU Sustainability Council's Green Fund. "Students pay a fee that creates a fund specifically earmarked for sustainability improvements and programming, and students have the majority voice on the committee that decides funding," Kris Schachel, sustainability coordinator said. Providing a place for students to charge electronic devices is only a secondary purpose for the table and solstice.

"As much as anything else, it's a teaching tool," Phil Gatton, director of plant and service operations, said. "When we approached the Green Fund, that's how we sold it. It was an educational tool just showing what the potential is for solar power." The table, which lights up at night and stores enough energy for two cloudy days, is equipped with a display that shows how much power is being generated. "I really think it's just a unique educational tool," Gatton said. "A lot of people know about solar, but don't understand the energy involved in it. They can see on a sunny day how much energy is being generated."

Schachel hopes the table gets people thinking of other ways renewable energy can be used on the campus. "In addition to the benefits of providing these stations for the use and convenience of campus members, they demonstrate a tangible use of renewable energy, and thus become a conversation-starter about what else might be possible," Schachel said.

The device on a solar-charging picnic table at SIU shows how much energy is being absorbed from the sun at any given time. Students can use the table as a place to sit and study or relax while charging electronic devices using 'green' energy.

Best things learned/produced from project:

CARBONDALE, ILL. — Students at Southern Illinois University in Carbondale have a solar-powered way to charge their electronic devices, just by sitting at a picnic table.

The (Carbondale) Southern Illinoisan (<http://bit.ly/1m7kbKi>) reports crews last week installed the Solar Dok table made of recyclable plastics. It's equipped with an umbrella, four seats, a solar array, a 110-volt charger, a display box and two USB ports.

The table lights up at night and stores enough energy for two cloudy days.

A \$3,000 device that provides solar-powered charging capabilities without the picnic table is being installed near the student center.

Michigan-based EnerFusion makes the tables at a cost of a little more than \$10,000 apiece.

The charging-stations are funded by a fee students pay for environmentally projects.

Read more here: <http://www.bnd.com/2014/04/29/3184023/siu-carbondale-unveils-solar-powered.html#storylink=cpy>

How do you define sustainability?

Has this changed over the course of your project? If so, how?

What do you see as the next step for the project?

Optional: Do you have any suggestions for the SIU Sustainability Council to improve the Green Fund award process?

Attach a minimum of five images – these will be used to promote interest in Sustainability Council projects. These can be photographs of the progress of the project, the completed project, or promotional materials.





