

RUTGERS

New Jersey Agricultural
Experiment Station



JANUARY/FEBRUARY 2023 ~ LATE EDITION
WATER PAGES eNEWSLETTER

**May every day of the new year inspire you to grow!
Happy New Year !
~Rutgers Cooperative Extension Water Resources Program~**

The 2023 Green Infrastructure Champions Training Program is off to a great start!

The 2023 Green Infrastructure Champions Training Program kicked off on January 13 with over 260+ individuals signed up for the program. This next round of champions has quite the reach! First, all counties in New Jersey are represented. Second, other states like New York, Pennsylvania, Maine, Kansas, Florida, Maryland, Washington, Georgia, Louisiana, and the territory of Puerto Rico are represented. Third, other countries are even represented and include registrants from Ontario, Canada and Nicosia, Cyprus! The people signed up for the program come from a variety of organizations. There are people that are simply interested in green infrastructure, self-employed, that work for non-profits, private firms, government agencies, academia, green teams/environmental commissions, and/or municipal positions. The RCE Water Resources Program hopes to engage and empower all those taking the classes!

**DID YOU REGISTER YET?
What are you waiting for?
Become a leader, become a
Green Infrastructure Champion in 2023!**

There is still time to sign up for the remaining six (6) classes! Please remember you need to be signed up for a minimum of five (5) classes to be considered a green infrastructure champion!



Here is the link to sign up:
<https://forms.gle/G5Ki6BndpiaL37tc9>.

All sessions for the 2023 training program will be offered via an online format from 10AM to 12NOON every other Friday.

Generous support from our funders is allowing us to offer this year's training for free.

Here is what we can offer as part of the program:

- Training on green infrastructure planning and implementation
- Technical support to develop a design for a green infrastructure demonstration project
- Networking opportunities with other Green Infrastructure Champions for mutual support
- Assistance with grant writing

2023 Training Program Class Schedule:

1. How to identify green infrastructure projects in your town (January 13)
2. Moving from planning to implementation of green infrastructure (January 27)
3. Maintaining green infrastructure practices/projects (February 10)
4. Stormwater management regulations, policies, and ordinances (February 24)
5. Green infrastructure planning and implementation for Sustainable Jersey points (March 10)
6. Green infrastructure projects for schools (March 24)
7. How to design and build a rain garden (April 7)
8. Retrofitting traditional detention basins with green infrastructure (April 21)
9. Developing green infrastructure master plans for an entire site or neighborhood (May 5)
10. Using green infrastructure to promote climate resiliency (May 19)

Registration is required.

Attendance at a minimum of **five (5) classes** is **needed for certification**.

This program is partially funded by the **New Jersey Agricultural Experiment Station, Geraldine R. Dodge Foundation, William Penn Foundation, and New Jersey Sea Grant Consortium** and is a collaboration of the **Rutgers Cooperative Extension Water Resources Program** and the Green Infrastructure Subcommittee of **Jersey Water Works**.

Contact **Hollie DiMuro** (hollie.dimuro@rutgers.edu) if you are interested in becoming a Green Infrastructure Champion.

Angelo L. Tomaso Elementary School Students Learn About Rain Gardens

The following is a reprint of a press release prepared by Warren Township Schools, Contact: Shannon Regan, sregan@warrentboe.org.

Fifth-grade students from Angelo L. Tomaso (ALT) elementary school in Warren Township, NJ, recently had a visit from two special guests. Michelle Hatfield of the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (NJDEP) and the AmeriCorps Watershed Ambassador for the Lower Raritan River Watershed Management Area, and Christopher Perez, Senior Program Coordinator for the Rutgers Cooperative Extension Water Resources Program. Hatfield and Perez explained to the students how the rain garden in front of ALT Elementary School promotes groundwater recharge and protects the Raritan River watershed by slowing stormwater runoff and reducing pollutants in nearby streams.



Michelle Hatfield of the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (NJDEP) and the AmeriCorps Watershed Ambassador for the Lower Raritan River Watershed Management Area, and Christopher Perez, Senior Program Coordinator for the Rutgers Cooperative Extension Water Resources Program, came to speak with students at Angelo L. Tomaso School on the importance of the rain garden. Photo credit: Dr. Susan Kline

Dr. Susan Kline, Innovation & Design teacher, scheduled the visit to coordinate with her 5th-grade civil engineering unit in which students are asked to redesign an intersection that floods when it rains. “When students first encounter this project, their go-to strategy is always installing sewers,” shares Dr. Kline. “During this unit, we discuss the importance of fresh water and how communities can protect this precious resource.” Students learn about several strategies engineers use to manage stormwater, including swales, dry wells, and rain gardens.



ALT students Valen Morcos, Sophia Clarke, Angelica Orsillo, Sophia Shehady, and Maple Wei listen carefully as Michelle Hatfield and Christopher Perez explain the benefits of the rain garden at Angelo L. Tomaso School. Photo credit: Dr. Susan Kline

ALT's rain garden was installed in 2020 with funding from a Federal 319(h) grant awarded by the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection. Christopher Perez and his team from Rutgers Cooperative Extension Water Resources Program surveyed the land creating the optimal design to manage stormwater in front of the school successfully. "Rain gardens are a sustainable way for businesses, schools, and homeowners to address runoff issues and improve water quality," said Perez. "They also beautify the landscape and create wildlife habitat, making them a win-win for the community."

Installation of the rain garden was a cooperative effort between the Rutgers Cooperative Extension, Warren's Department of Public Works, and Warren's Green Team.



ASLA
NEW JERSEY

**The New Jersey
American Society of
Landscape Architects
(NJASLA) 2023
Annual Conference**



Photo credit: NJASLA

The New Jersey American Society of Landscape Architects (NJASLA) annual conference finally came back in-person this year after two years being held in a virtual setting. Harrah's Convention Hall, in Atlantic City, was filled with landscape architects, planners, environmentalists, and emerging professionals from around the tri-state area to continue their education credits, networking, and passion for landscape architecture. With over 20 education sessions, attendees had the opportunity to learn about topics regarding the conference's theme, Sense of Place. The past three years have shown the world how vital the importance of an outdoor place really is. Using environmental and social design strategies, the conference focused on topics on how to produce places that can adapt for communities to equally benefit everyone.

The Professional Meet and Greet and the Diversity Initiative Summit were key social events during the conference. The Meet and Greet was organized by Water Resources Program's own, Alex Ciorlian and Lubna Lakhwala (Lagan Engineering). This event consisted of over 40 professionals networking with roughly 30 students from the Rutgers University Landscape Architecture Program. Students had the opportunity to move through six rounds of nine minutes to meet different professionals and showcase their portfolios, experiences, and future interests. The event is held annually and is a big success to engage emerging professionals who are about to graduate out into the field. "I felt great pride hosting this event with Lubna. It's an opportunity for students to really network with professionals who could be their potential employers in the future," says Alex Ciorlian who graduated from the RULA program in 2019.

Attending the Diversity Initiative Summit was an event for the ages in terms of outreach and engagement. The NJASLA Diversity Initiative curated a design charrette with the Atlantic County Institute of Technology (ACIT). This event consisted of working with high school students from ACIT, who pursue different STEM programs, to quickly design a park concept that is located in Atlantic City. Although nervous at first, this event let the high school students and professionals have the opportunity to communicate and draw their ideas on what they think redeveloping a park should look like. The high school students also displayed semester projects of physical models depicting their ideas for the park redevelopment. The majority of landscape architecture is discovered maybe later during one's college career, but this event truly opened up the world of landscape architecture to these high school students who might pursue this profession!

The conference solidified that landscape architecture continues to only grow with the necessity of improving our outdoor places.



Photo credit: NJASLA

Rain Garden Native Plant Spotlight ~ Red Twig Dogwood (*Cornus sericea*)

Red Twig Dogwood (*Cornus sericea*) is a deciduous shrub known for its bright red stems that add a colorful contrast to a winter garden. Found in wetlands and along streambanks, this shrub is a great option for rain gardens due to its tolerance for wet soils and year-round interest. In addition to its colorful fall foliage, Red Twig Dogwood produces a white flower in the spring and small berries in the summer, attracting pollinators and creating backyard wildlife habitat.

For more information:

Jerseyyards.org native plant database

<https://www.jerseyyards.org/plant/cornus-sericea/#more> ,

Wildflower.org

https://www.wildflower.org/plants/result.php?id_plant=COSE16



Photo credit: Chris Perez, RCE Water Resources Program



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