



Bring the Youth Energy Squad to Your School

BENEFITS:

- ✓ Lower utility bills – **D-YES pays for itself and more!**
- ✓ Hands-on school and community greening projects foster teamwork, communication, problem-solving skills & leadership
- ✓ Engaging, in-class STEM lessons aligned to standards
- ✓ Workshops and resources for parents and the community
- ✓ Mentoring, college and career coaching
- ✓ **Ability to advertise your school as a Detroit Green School Leader**

MISSION

Founded in 1981, EcoWorks creates opportunities to learn and practice the sustainable use of energy and natural resources through innovative education, job training, consulting, social business and advocacy.



Energy monitors at Bennett Elementary

The Youth Energy Squad (YES), a program of EcoWorks, cultivates the next generation of green leaders by engaging youth from diverse backgrounds in hands-on service learning projects that make their homes, schools, and communities more sustainable.

Education
Services
Training + Jobs
Reclaim Detroit

VISION

“For too long, greening our schools, developing environmental literacy, and nurturing stewardship and an ethic of sustainability in our students have been after-thoughts in education debates.... [Green schools] should not be reserved for just a few high-achieving students in more prosperous communities.” -- U.S. Secretary of Education Arne Duncan, 2012

EcoWorks believes that green schools are essential to develop a diverse cadre of student leaders in the sustainability movement and to reinvigorate schools and neighborhoods. We believe every child deserves opportunities to actively learn about sustainability and participate in projects that make their homes, schools, and neighborhoods greener.



A YES crew member installs a window kit to keep a family warm.

building energy solutions

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For students, knowing how to lower their families' energy bills, how to purchase and grow healthy foods, and how to pursue green careers are not luxuries. We believe these skills—which bolster academic performance, leadership, communication skills, teamwork, professionalism, civic engagement, and work ethic—are best gained through project-based inquiry and meaningful community service.

APPROACH

In 2009, EcoWorks (formerly WARM Training Center) launched the Detroit Youth Energy Squad with twenty students in Detroit Community High School. Five years later, D-YES now has a team of 14 staff and AmeriCorps members working with more than 2,500 students in over 40 schools annually. *In the last two years, D-YES has saved these schools \$700,000 compared to their 2011-12 baseline.* For all of the great benefits to students, teachers, and the community, **the Youth Energy Squad more than pays for itself.**

YES takes a holistic approach to green leadership and offers an array of programming including rigorous in-class STEM lessons aligned to standards, year-long engagement with student green teams and afterschool programs, supporting student-led community greening projects, and by hiring high school students for an intensive 6-week summer jobs program. Through a combination of in-class and extracurricular experiences, students gain both applied academic and problem-solving skills and a range of leadership skills, including teamwork, communication, conflict resolution, professionalism, and civic engagement.

YES IMPACTS

- **Saved \$701,000 in electric, gas, and water costs among 43 participating schools, 2012-14**
- **Served more than 3,600 students and 1,630 school staff and parents**
- **Facilitated 585 energy conservation and school greening projects**
- **Employed over 120 students who earned \$130,000 in wages and \$142,000 in scholarships**
- **Provided home energy-saving visits to 2,700 households saving an estimated \$675,000 annually.**



AmeriCorps coordinators leading a school-wide green assembly.

The backbone of the program is a team of highly trained AmeriCorps Green School Coordinators who help teachers, administrators, and other staff integrate green activities into their work and serve as role models and mentors for youth. AmeriCorps coordinators commit to a year of service and range in age from 23 to 70. Coordinators have been engineers, architects, teachers, artists,



community organizers, social workers, and more. They share a passion for teaching and mentoring students and bring a wealth of experience and expertise in sustainability. Coordinators participate in a dedicated two-week training that prepares them for serving in school environments, working with youth at different grade levels, and for helping schools succeed in saving energy and reducing their environmental footprint.



Student projects – hydroponics, energy conservation, and healthy eating.

NUTS AND BOLTS

ECOWORKS ROLES:

- Assign a dedicated team of two AmeriCorps Green School Coordinators who provide ~ 8 hours of direct service to the school per week, not including time for prep, coordination, and follow-up.
- Provide high level program support and management and tailor the program to meet school interests and priorities.
- Facilitate energy-saving and school greening projects on a weekly basis.
- Lead in-class lessons, after-school programs, and parent workshops.
- Report program impacts on a quarterly basis.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES:

- Weekly e-newsletters that highlight school achievements and best practices from SE MI, promote YES projects for green teams, and communicate about upcoming events and additional resources.
- Annual events that bring teams many YES schools together to learn and share best practices.



Detroit Institute of Tech students present a workshop at a conference in Lansing.



- Energy-saving and sustainability workshops that offer parents the tools and applied knowledge to save money and make their homes healthier.
- Connections to non-profit and community partners such as the Southeast Michigan Stewardship Coalition and others who offer additional resources for teachers and students.

"This was one of the most inspiring presentations I have ever seen at any conference and I have been to over 200 conferences." Ethan Lowenstein, EMU Professor of Education at EMU and Director of Southeast Michigan Stewardship Coalition, remarking on a D-YES student-led presentation at the state-wide Place-Based Education Conference.

COST:

- Schools pay an \$8,000 match for the year-long YES program. EcoWorks secures a \$9,000 match through AmeriCorps, private foundations, and other sources. Alternative arrangements may be available for the first year of participation and we are eager to find a solution within your budget.

MAKING IT HAPPEN

We aim to launch programs in new schools in September and have a limited number of slots available. If you would like to find out more about bringing the Youth Energy Squad to your school, please contact:

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A principal and student celebrate their accomplishments with D-YES at Detroit Community High.

