ABSTRACT

Framework:
The Sustainable Landscape Demonstration Garden is a model for urban environments—designed to provide health benefits to people and the environment. Campus Landscape Services and Planning and Landscape Architecture representatives informed students designs. Undergraduate students alongside Campus Landscape Services staff added composted leaves to the soil and installed native plants. The garden is maintained by students enrolled in a Creative Inquiry research class. Students earn Human Subjects Research Certification and conduct perception surveys of passersby. They also serve as ambassadors and engage in conversation with passersby; recommending access to the Web page that contains the garden history, designs, plant profile sheets, and publications. Soil samples are analyzed yearly by the university agricultural soil testing services laboratory. The hypothesis is that an urban garden that is designed, installed, and maintained using research driven theory and methods, can simultaneously enhance the health and well-being of people and the environment.

OUTCOMES

Outcomes:
People returned to this site within one-hour of installation. Insects returned to the site during the second growing season. Five years of in-person survey data (pre and post installation, n=899 surveys) indicate a significant rise in users as well as increased perceived perceptions of beauty, safety, and maintenance for the site. Health, environmental, and educational aspects increased as well. Google Analytics data used to identify the most viewed plants for a five-year period indicate Muhlenbergia capillaris is the most frequent plant on line at the garden website.

Implications:
This project is constructed to be replicated or adapted for use in other urban sites that desire to increase health and well-being of the ecosystem (which includes people). Sustainable gardens strategically located in the busiest sections of the city have the potential to both enliven and educate passersby—resulting in increased appreciation of and use of sustainable practices resulting in healthier vibrant ecosystems that support a variety of life forms.

PERCEPTION SURVEY RESULTS

HEALTH

ENVIRONMENT

EDUCATION

PREFERRED PLANTS

GOOGLE ANALYTICS SURVEY RESULTS

http://www.clemson.edu/cafsl/demo/

REFERENCES

Primary Sources:
Sustainable Landscape Demonstration Site Website. E. Vincent, Clemson University: http://www.clemson.edu/cafsl/demos/
Sustainable Sites Initiative Website: http://www.sustainablesites.org/about

Clemson University Public Service and Agriculture (PSA)
Clemson University Creative Inquiry (CI)
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