

Morgan DeWeese

29th Street Community Garden
Cleanup Project
PAS 300
Old Dominion University



29th Street Community Garden Cleanup

- The 29th Street Community Garden Cleanup was held on Saturday, November 18, 2017 from 10 am to 3pm.
- The project was coordinated by myself with the help of Johnathan Nye who is the Volunteer Director, and Co-Founder, of Eco Cycling.
- 10 volunteers participated.
- 3 businesses participated by donating money and lumber.
- 4 garden beds were cleaned and repaired (2 more than anticipated).

Step 1: Ask Businesses to Donate Money and Material

- Created a donation request letter.
- Emailed donation request letter to ten businesses.
- Went in person to businesses to request money and materials.
- 2 businesses donated money.
- 1 business donated lumber.



Our mission is to be stewards of the environment & our community by helping to create, grow and maintain a sustainable habitat for every creature to live and thrive. "We support a healthier, active & greener way of life."

Volunteers with Eco Cycling are working to repair and update the 29th Street Peace Garden, across from James Monroe Elementary. The produce raised in the community gardens is used for local residents, food pantries and shelters. Eco Cycling's community gardens provide opportunities for children and adults to learn about the importance of sustainable living and how to cultivate, produce, and maintain their own healthy food source. By building better community relations we can educate our neighbors, provide locally grown food and produce to the community, and help to feed the food insecure. Biodiversity within urban land use development is essential for a sustainable and resilient population to thrive in its environment. This means the incorporation of more productive green space, such as community gardens, micro-farms, and rooftop gardens is necessary to meet the immediate needs of its people. These gardens provide communities and neighbors the opportunity to connect, work together, build relationships, develop life skills, and provide for others.

The 29th Street Peace Garden is in need of repairs and updates. After so many years the wood begins to rot and warp and the soil deteriorates. With your help we can get the resources necessary to keep the community gardens healthy and thriving. Your support not only impacts the efforts of Eco Cycling, but also the students who come to learn, the volunteers who support the garden, and the families the gardens help support.

Needed supplies include; Untreated wood lumber, bricks and mortar, pallets, fencing material, plant ties, garden stakes, top soil, deck screws, garden soil, chicken wire, hoses, compost, shovels, tillers, spading forks, volunteers, etc.

There are plenty of supplies and help needed to restore the community gardens. Supplies can come in the form of recycled materials, material donations, monetary donations, and volunteers. In any form, your support is appreciated. We would like to have any materials or money donations by November 11th, 2017. If you have any questions regarding the project please contact Morgan DeWeese at Morgan.DeWeese@gmail.com. We look forward to working with you to continue educating, building community relationships, and providing healthy food to those in need.

Thank you for your support.

Morgan DeWeese
Volunteer
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Step 2: Create and Distribute Volunteer Request Flyer

- Created event flyer to get volunteers.
- Distributed flyer with donation request letter.
- Sent flyer to Old Dominion student organizations.
- Posted flyer at work, on Givepulse.com, and Facebook.
- 11 volunteers participated.

Volunteers Needed!

29th St Community Garden Cleanup

When: Saturday, November 18

10am—3pm

Where: 529 West 29th Street, Norfolk

Bring your gardening tools and gloves if you have them. Feel free to bring a snack and some water too!

Interested in volunteering?

Contact: Morgan DeWeese if you will be joining us!

Email Morgan.DeWeese@gmail.com

In the email please include your name, best contact method, and if you plan to volunteer from 10am—3pm or for only a portion of that time.

See you at the garden!

Eco Cycling is looking for volunteers to help repair and update the 29th Street Peace Garden, across from James Monroe Elementary. The produce raised in the community gardens is used for local residents, food pantries and shelters. Eco Cycling's community gardens provide opportunities for children and adults to learn about the importance of sustainable living and how to cultivate, produce, and maintain their own healthy food source. By building better community relations we can educate our neighbors, provide locally grown food and produce to the community, and help to feed the food insecure. Help us keep this beautiful garden alive and ready for planting more veggies, fruits, and herbs!



Collecting the Lumber for the Project

- Went to lumber yard to collect the wood.
- Loaded the wood on a truck.
- Unloaded wood at the 29th Street Community Garden one week before the project day.



Day of Volunteer Project

- First group of volunteers arrived at 10am.
- Introduced the group to myself, the garden, and the goals and purpose of the project.
- First task was to clear dead plants from the beds and cut back dormant plants.



Day of Volunteer Project

- Second task was to remove old boards from around the beds.
- Then to dig a small trench around the beds to put in new boards.



Day of Volunteer Project

- Second group of volunteers arrived at 12pm.
- Introduced the group to myself, the garden, and the purpose of the project.
- This group only needed to remove old wood from around the beds.
- Then the group dug a shallow trench around the beds to place new wood in.



The End Result

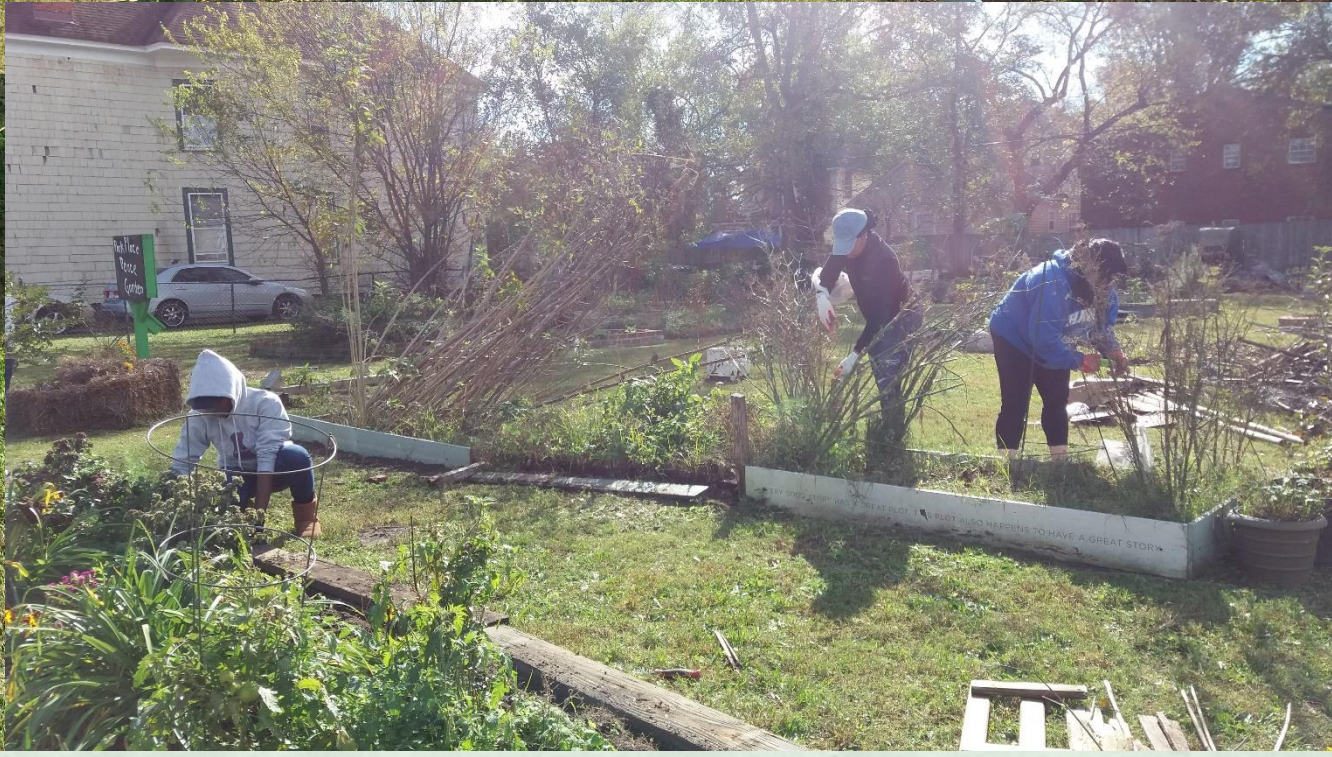
- More garden beds were repaired than anticipated.
- 11 volunteers was more than enough people.
- Enough lumber was left over that can be used for future projects or creating new raised garden beds.

Before >



After





Challenges During the Project

- Volunteers arriving at different times meant needing to switch my focus.
- Leadership Challenge:
 - Some volunteers only needed a verbal explanation and brief demonstration of tasks.
 - Others needed the visual demonstration and less verbal explanation.
 - Had to be directive to keep some volunteers on task.
 - Also needed to be supportive. Repairing raised garden beds was a first for most of the volunteers.
 - Needed to be patient. Though I had a clear vision of what needed to be done, I had to make sure I was communicating it clearly.

My Experience

Leadership

- 1) I needed to create a clear vision.
 - 2) I needed to work with many different people.
 - 3) I needed to be respectful of the differences between the people I worked with.
 - 4) I needed to create a relationship with the people I worked with in hopes of working together again in the future.
 - 5) I needed to complete the project to enhance Eco Cycling's Community Garden.
 - 6) I needed to be a democratic leader.
- 1) The vision changed a little as the project progressed, but the ultimate goal remained the same.
 - 2) I had to work with different businesses, the nonprofit Volunteer director and the volunteers
 - 3) The volunteers came from different backgrounds and brought different perspectives and I needed to be respectful of those differences.
 - 4) My relationship with the volunteers, and businesses, was created in hopes of building a community in which we all participate towards sustainability.
 - 5) The repairs and cleaning at the garden will help those beds be ready to be planted in the spring and continue Eco Cycling's efforts towards sustainable communities and providing for the food insecure.
 - 6) I needed to let the volunteers know what needed to get done and support them in the process.

My Experience

- Upheld the value of teamwork by working with all the volunteers and adapting to their learning styles.
- After the project was over 3 volunteers expressed interest in continuing to be involved with projects at the garden. Everyone seemed to have during the project. I was able to motivate and inspire.
- When volunteers arrived I explained the importance of the project and how it helps the community. I provided both verbal and visual instructions of the tasks.
- Moved between groups of volunteers to keep everyone on track. Also had fun conversations!
- By completing this projecting we are able to continue the efforts of the community garden and Eco Cycling.

Leadership Theories

Contingency Theory: “Effective leadership style is relative to the situation, and that creating the right environment can help build successful leadership within an organization.” (Cropf, 2008, p. 241)

I was able to be an effective leader during the project because of my desire to be an advocate for the environment. Creating sustainable communities is a part of that.

Leader-member Exchange Theory studies leadership with an emphasis on “relationships in the work environment” (Cropf, 2008, p. 244)

The volunteers desire to help the community and the garden and my passion for the project created a meaningful connection between myself and the volunteers.

Leadership Theories

Transformational Leadership Theory is a theory that “focuses on the leader’s ability to generate motivation and express a clear vision on the future” (Cropf, 2008, p. 244)

This is an aspect of my leadership skills that needs work. I do not consider myself charismatic, but a decent public speaker. I will not always be able to work in areas, or on projects, where I will be as passionate as I was about this project. However, I still need to generate motivation. It is important that I communicate clearly what my vision is and how it will be accomplished.

Leadership Theories

Entrepreneurial Leadership in the public sector, or **Public Entrepreneur**, is “an approach to public leadership emphasizing a market orientation similar to that found in private business.” (Cropf, 2008, p. 252) In other words, public administrators do not just follow orders handed down to them, but innovate, create, and lead.

This theory only loosely applies to my experience with the service learning project. While there was no competition, volunteering is often motivated by personal interest or personal gain. Though I started out the project because it was assigned to me, I plan to continue working with Eco Cycling and coordinating more volunteer projects to help the community garden.

In the End...

- I learned that I can effectively coordinate a volunteer project.
- I can communicate well with many different people.
- I can adapt my leadership style to those around me and the situation.
- I can communicate well, but not great.
- I am interested in coordinating more volunteer events.
- I hope to be able to incorporate this type of work in my career.

