

Live, Work, Play, Grow

Educational Outreach Program Summary for the Connections for Sustainability Project



Livability Educator
Jaclin DuRant

The Connections for Sustainability project is funded by a combination grant from the US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) and the US Department of Transportation (DOT) as part of the interagency Partnership for Sustainable Communities. The City's proposal was one of 42 chosen throughout the country to receive funds, and only one of 14 to receive joint funding from HUD and DOT. The grant project began in spring 2011, and is titled "Connections for Sustainability: Linking Greenville's Neighborhoods to Jobs and Open Space."

The Connections for Sustainability Project Team



Wayne Leftwich
Community Planner
Connections Project Manager

Wayne Leftwich is a Community Planner at the City of Greenville and is responsible for the planning and reporting of community development activities, involved in the preparation and implementation of neighborhood and corridor master plans, and is managing the Connections for Sustainability project. Wayne earned his master's degree in City and Regional Planning from Clemson University and received his certification from the American Institute for Certified Planners (AICP).



Christa Jordan
Connections Grant Coordinator

Christa Jordan is the Grant Project Coordinator for the Connections team. She loves working with the community, and is especially interested in projects that involve lots of public participation. She often attends neighborhood meetings to share updates about the project. She is responsible for project reporting and helps with graphics, the website, newsletter, and email announcements.



Jaclin DuRant
Livability Educator

Jaclin has a masters of science in Conservation Ecology and Sustainable Development from the University of Georgia. She is a naturalist, writer, and artist who believes that encouraging and understanding the human connections to the natural environment will only benefit us all. Jaclin has enjoyed every minute of her work as the Livability Educator with the Connections for Sustainability project.

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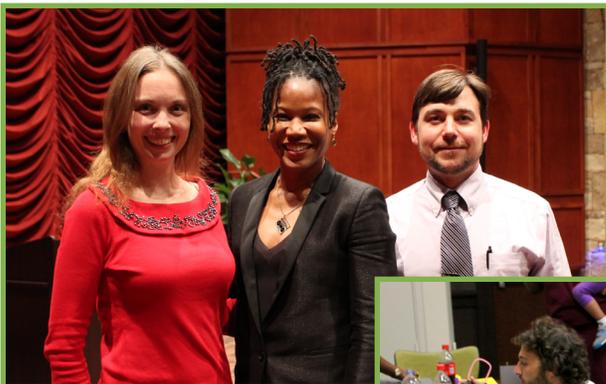
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Live, Work, Play, Grow

A platform for community education

Developing the educational outreach portion of the Connections for Sustainability project has been an exciting journey. When project team members first set out to describe and plan for educational outreach, it became clear that everyone had a very different idea of what outreach was, what topics needed to be addressed, and how the program should operate. Much research and planning went into the educational outreach program, including bi-weekly meetings and the crafting of an outreach plan. Finally, the umbrella phrase “Live, Work, Play, Grow” was adopted as the framework for the Connections for Sustainability project’s educational outreach program.

Why Live, Work, Play, Grow?

Early on in the Connections for Sustainability project, team members were often asked to describe and explain the project. Connections team lead and project manager, Wayne Leftwich, often stated that one of the goals of the project was to help increase connections between the places that people live, work, and play in the City. We began to expand upon that idea; that we were developing and strengthening connections, not just through plans for transit or parks, but by strengthening relationships, providing knowledge, and working with our communities to help shape the growth that is occurring in our city in a way that can be beneficial for all.

Live, Work, Play, and Grow sustainably.

This phrase fit with our project goals and provided an open and flexible framework for our outreach programs.

The next step in the process was to begin filling in the framework. We chose a diverse approach to educational outreach as a way to reach as many of the members of our community as we could. The Live, Work, Play, Grow programming included on-line articles and newsletters, a monthly speaker series, a monthly movie night, and special events that included Spring and Fall Fairs. In addition to these programs, we have set up a booth at local events, included educational components in our community engagement activities, and much more.

This document provides a review of some of the events, programs, and documents that were developed as part of the Connections for Sustainability’s educational outreach program. Though not a comprehensive report of all aspects of Connections project’s outreach, this overview describes the project’s educational programming within the Live, Work, Play, Grow framework and highlights some of the ways that the many pieces of our educational outreach fit together.



The Livability Studio

The Livability Studio is a hub for community involvement and educational events. Workshops, seminars, and project activities are held through the studio to educate the community on livability and create awareness of urban sustainability.

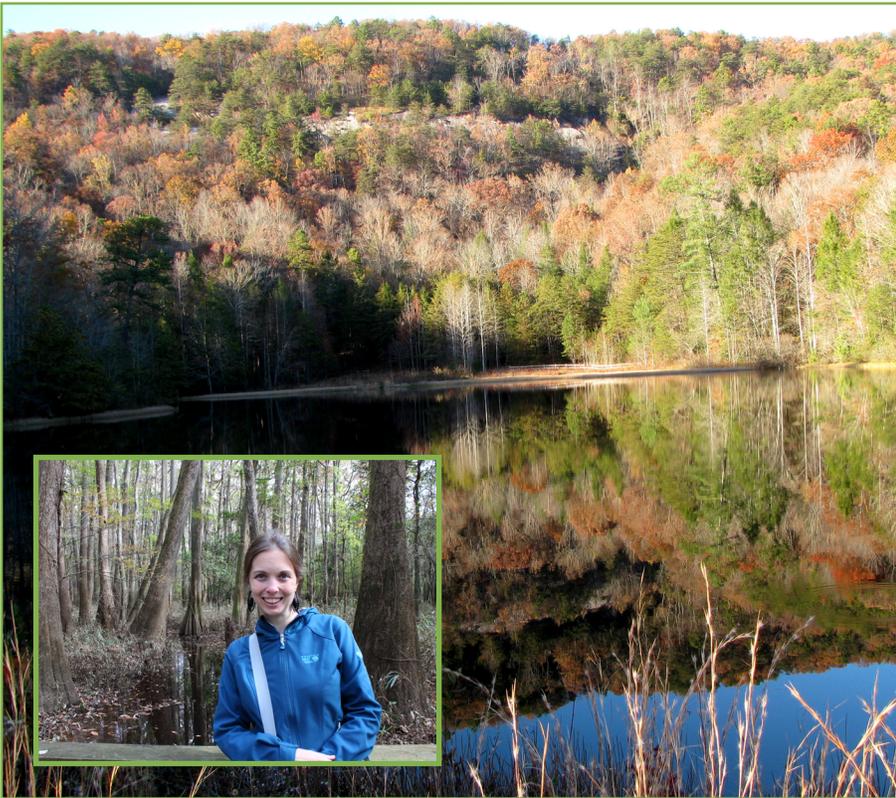


Sustainable Cinema

This educational film series is made up of monthly movie nights presented by the Connections for Sustainability team. Community members are invited to join us for popcorn, healthy snacks, and a series of short video clips. The videos are chosen based on a monthly theme that falls under the “Live, Work, Play, Grow” framework and is a concern or issue for our community. Following the videos, community members are invited to share and discuss their opinions.

Sustainable Conversations

This speaker series brings in local and national experts to discuss topics related to livability and sustainability in our community. The speaker series is an opportunity for residents to learn about the issues that face our community and ways that these issues can be addressed from experts in the field. Sustainable Conversations is primarily a lunch and learn series, though some events have been held in the evening. The flexibility of the series has helped us reach a diverse audience.



The Livability Educator writes regular educational columns and articles including a monthly “Sustainable Spotlight” series. This series appears in the Connections newsletter and highlights ways that residents can develop a more sustainable lifestyle. The “Walk in the Woods” photo journal series highlights the Upstate’s many natural areas, and draws connections between the ways that we live and our environment.

On the Web

The Connections for Sustainability project website provides a variety of sections and segments dedicated to outreach and education, and outlines the many ways that the public can be involved with the project.

On the project website, visitors will discover many different options for learning about the Connections project, and the many topics that we address through our educational programs. A “What’s New” page showcases the most current events that the project is involved in, the “Livability Studio” tab provides up to date information on the speaker and film series, and the “Project Library” offers downloadable copies of all of the documents that have been created during the project.

Home What's New Livability Educator Livability Studio Planning for Livability Neighborhoods Timeline Project Library

connections
FOR SUSTAINABILITY

calendar **contact us**

A city can look forward to a promising future only if its growth is accompanied by a full knowledge of an appreciation for its past.

- Dr. Jeffrey R. Willis, Remembering Greenville: Photographs from the Coxé Collection

Definitions
Zoning:
The division of a municipality into sections reserved for particular purposes and types of land use.
[More Definitions](#)

November 2013
West Side Fall Fair | November 2 at the Kroc Center

The West Side Fall Fair will provide an update of the West Side Comprehensive Plan currently underway, as well as provide a day of activities and celebration of the West Greenville, West End, and Southern side neighborhoods, talent, and history. It is going to be FUN!! Join us for a free lunch, give-aways, and the following events:

- West Side Talent Show
- Local History Show and Tell (bring your own story to share!)
- a TREmendous Day celebration of all things related to trees (baby trees available for adoption)
- Local author, C. Michael Forsyth book reading and signing
- Upstate History Museum historical characters
- MobiRec van will be unpacked for play!
- CPR demonstration with the lovely Resuscitation Annie
- Plus many cool, fun, and educational booths

West Side Plan Workshop Wrap-Up

September 5, 6:00 to 7:30, Kroc Center– See the results of the west side inventory and analysis, including all of the work done over the week-long design workshop. Whether you attended any of the activities in August or not, this is a good meeting to attend to make sure the consultants have it right. [More Information on West Side](#)

West Side Fall Fair
November 2, 11am-2pm

A screen shot from the “What’s New” page on the Connections project website shows upcoming events for the month of November. This page changes on a regular basis to highlight Connections project events.

Live

Encouraging and developing environmentally, economically, and socially sustainable practices in the home and community

Sustainable Cinema

Food Deserts -

This series of videos related to poverty and food deserts along with ways that communities across the country are increasing access to healthy foods through programs like mobile farmers markets, school gardening programs, and more. The director of the City of Greenville's downtown farmer's market came to talk about the City's acceptance of food stamps at the market.

Fresh Food: community and backyard gardens -

This movie night featured videos related to community gardening, pop-up gardens, community supported agriculture programs, and growing your own food in a small urban space through techniques such as vertical gardening, raised beds, and more. Reece Lyerly, director of Gardening for Good, and Bo Cable, founder of the Generous Garden Project, spoke about their programs and how they are working to increase access to healthy food in Greenville.

The Weight of the Nation -

This movie night featured excerpts from the celebrated HBO series, the *Weight of the Nation*, about obesity, its effects on people and communities across the US, and the ways in which various individuals and municipalities are coming together to fight the obesity epidemic. Matt Manley with LiveWell Greenville and Brad Cutino with the City of Greenville spoke about available programs to help fight obesity including the City's new mobile recreation bus.

Sustainable Conversations

CPTED

Art Hushen from the National Institute of Crime Prevention gave a talk on Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) highlighting some of the ways that design can be utilized to increase the safety of a neighborhood, development, or home.

Crop Up -

Elizabeth Beak with Crop Up, a consulting firm from Charleston, SC, spoke about community garden and urban food systems, food hubs, implementing small agricultural systems in urban areas, and the many diverse benefits that community gardening can have in a neighborhood or city.



Healthy Eating -

Kelly Frazier, a professor in the Health Sciences Department at Furman University, gave a talk about healthy foods followed by a cooking demonstration and tasting. Attendees learned about ways that their diet can impact their health and had the opportunity to taste test spinach and fruit smoothies, red pepper humus, and other quick and healthy options that Kelly showed them how to make.

Continued on page 10.....

Simple Summer Goals for Improving Personal Health

Sustainable Spotlight Article

Connections for Sustainability Newsletter 17

Written by Livability Educator, Jaclin DuRant

Improving our personal health is an important step in the move towards a more sustainable society. Increased health leads to a decrease in spending related to health care, lower absence rates due to sickness, and increased productivity at work. Also, healthy people tend to be happy people.

Summer is a great time to make a commitment to increased personal health, and the best way to make a change in your lifestyle is to start with small, easy to reach goals. So, here are some simple ideas to help you get started:

- 1) Take the stairs instead of the elevator. Start by taking the stairs once a day when you would normally ride an elevator, or for distances that are under 4 floors.
- 2) Swap a soda for a glass of water. Add some mint and a slice of fresh squeezed lemon for a refreshing summer drink without the calories.
- 3) Wash your hands. Many of the sicknesses we pick up come from contact with germs. Get into the habit of hand washing now, and you'll be happy that you did when cold season comes back around.
- 4) Go for a walk. Start with a short lunch walk with co-workers or an afternoon ramble with friends or family. Exercise increases physical fitness and can help reduce stress. Just make sure to drink plenty of water when you're out in the heat and don't forget #5.
- 5) Wear sunscreen. If you're going to

Access to and the availability of healthy food is a topic of vital importance in communities and cities like Greenville across the country. Individuals who live in poverty often live in areas designated by the US EPA as “food deserts” areas where the only food available is poor quality, highly processed, unhealthy options like fast food. As a result, minority and lower income communities in cities often have a higher proportion of people who struggle with obesity and obesity related health effects such as heart disease and diabetes.

Food

Topic Highlight



Across the nation, communities like ours are tackling the related problems of obesity and access

and availability of healthy food in a variety of inspiring ways.

We addressed the topic of food in three different Sustainable Cinema movie nights: “Food and Community,” “The Weight of the Nation,” and “Fresh Food” as well as with two different speakers, Kelly Frazier from Furman University’s Health Sciences Department and Elizabeth Beak with Crop Up, a consulting firm out of Charleston SC that specializes in food based community projects such as food hubs and community gardens, and through special events.

...Simply Healthy continued

be outside, sunscreen is a must. Keep a little tube in your desk drawer at work so that you always have it if you need it.

6) Make exercise fun. If you chose an exercise program that you don’t enjoy, then you won’t keep up with it. Instead, look for something fun. Try a dance class, join an intermural sports league, or go hiking with a group of friends. If it feels like you’re playing, then you won’t even notice the workout!



7) Snack on local, fresh produce. If you’re aching for something sweet, freeze some local blueberries or toss a couple of peach slices in the blender with some ice and a teaspoon of local honey.

8) Make that appointment. We all have an appointment that we’ve been putting off: the eye doctor, the dentist, getting that mole checked, or the yearly physical that just keeps slipping away. Go ahead and make the call. Staying informed and on top of your health will help you set goals and catch possible issues before they become big problems.

Try making a simple health related goal. Start with something you know you should do but often forget like remembering to floss twice a day or taking your vitamins each morning. Keep it small and simple, and master it before adding a new goal. Before you know it, you’ll be on your way to a healthier, happier, you!

A J Whittenberg Elementary School students and teachers take “Just a Minute” out of their day to dance their way to health.



Live



The Livability Educator

Guest Lectures and Talks -

Livability Educator, Jaclin DuRant, speaks at local schools and for community organizations on a variety of topics.

The Sustainability Director at Bon Secours Hospital invited Jaclin to speak to a small group of residents in a local community garden about beneficial insects in the garden, their importance, and easy ways to protect and provide habitats for them.

Jaclin partnered with A J Whittenberg Elementary School Librarian, Amanda Leblanc, to present a workshop on electronics recycling during the Upstate Technology Conference.

Sustainability Spotlight Articles -

Many of the topics for the monthly Sustainability Spotlight column relate to things that can be done at home to live sustainably. The full text of all of

the articles is available on the Livability Educator's page on the Connections project's website.

Example titles include:

"Your Coffee can Help Save the Rainforest"

"Keeping Cool While Going Green"

"The big deal about Local Food"

"Simple, Sustainable, and Warm"

and more.

Special Events

Spring and Green -

The Connections project hosted the Spring and Green fair at the West Greenville Community Center. The fair provided an opportunity for residents to learn about ways to make their lives more sustainable, and to connect to many of the organizations and information available in our community.

Featured Partner: Upstate Forever

Upstate Forever, a local non-profit organization, has been a part of several Connections for Sustainability educational outreach events.

During the "Bike Night" Sustainable Cinema, attendees heard from Upstate Forever's Director, Van Whitehead, about the new B-cycle bike share

program that Upstate Forever was working to bring to Greenville. During the West Side Comprehensive Planning week long charrette, the Connections project partnered with Upstate Forever to host a virtual kiosk where B-cycle members could check in their bikes to participate in the planning process.

The Safety Photo booth

The Connections project developed a safety themed photo booth for outreach events. Utilizing recycled cardboard and bright acrylic paints, the quirky props for the photo booth include a large bee with the words "Bee Safe," head bands with eyes on either side that say "Look both Ways," a giant bicycle helmet, and more. Posters about the proper way to put on a bike helmet and tips on talking to children about safety round out the booth along with blinking safety lights that sport the Connections for Sustainability logo. The photo booth has visited a variety of events including A J Whittenberg Elementary's Family Fitness night and the Spring and Green Fair.

Neighborhood Clean-up

Connections project team members led a neighborhood clean-up project during Hands on Greenville Day for community involvement sponsored by the United Way. More than 60 volunteers from local businesses collected over 150 bags of trash from S. Hudson street, adjacent neighborhood streets, the Swamp Rabbit Trail and Reedy River flood plain in Greenville's West side.

CNT Presentation

The Center for Neighborhood Technology (CNT) gave a presentation on the H & T (Housing and Transportation) index of affordability. The presentation centered around the concept of housing and transportation being considered together as a determination of the affordability of where we live, as opposed to just considering the cost of housing.





Event Highlight

Spring and Green Fair

As we continue to grow and develop as a society and a City, the idea of sustainability becomes more and more important. Yet, to the average citizen, sustainability is often considered a lofty concept that doesn't apply to everyday life. Nothing could be further from the truth. One goal of the Connections for Sustainability project is to make livability and sustainability concepts accessible to all citizens through education and outreach events, and in doing so, engage the public in contemplation of their connections to the social, built, and natural environment.



The Spring & Green Fair was primarily geared towards providing educational and

demonstrative information relating to sustainability for residents in Greenville's west side. As part of the Connections for Sustainability educational outreach efforts, the Spring & Green Fair included booths related to a range of topics that provided residents with the tools to Live, Work, Play, and Grow more sustainably.

Local organizations were on hand to provide information about a variety of topics related to sustainability, including community gardening, job training programs, home weatherization, and more. Richard Osborne, with Greenville Technical College, taught residents about CPR with a resuscitation model. Reece Lyerly, with the local

non-profit community garden network Gardening for Good, shared healthy tea recipes and composting tips. Duke Energy and Furman University's Community Conservation Corps shared information on how to reduce energy usage and home weatherization tips. Community Development staff provided information on their home rehab programs for residents, and the City's recycling coordinator facilitated a recycled craft while teaching folks about the City's recycling centers and programs.



Playing a crucial role, students from the West Side Elementary School, A J Whittenberg, shared information about their experiences as part of AJW's green teams and the Livability Educator's programming. Other booth topics ranged from job training programs to Safe Routes to School. A local non-profit association of eye doctors performed free eye exams. Community members chipped in to run an informational booth about the local neighborhood associations, helped serve the buffet lunch, and even painted faces. An indoor blow-up slide provided a fun



activity for children of all ages, and the Connections project's safety photo booth was set up to take pictures of everyone as they pledged to keep themselves and their community safe. From traditional green topics like rain barrels and home energy efficiency, to social sustainability and building connections, the Spring and Green fair ranged the gamut of livability topics and truly had something for everyone.

Though more nebulous than recycling or biking, safety is absolutely an issue of sustainability. Safe neighborhoods are places that people want to stay, making that community more stable. In a stable community where people feel safe, those people are more likely to spend time outside engaging in healthy activities and interacting with their neighbors than in an area where people don't feel safe. In turn, more eyes on the street increases community safety.

Safe habits contribute to health by reducing the chance of and

Safety

Topic Highlight

age are hurt less severely than those who do not, then safe behaviors will also contribute to a more economically sustainable community where individuals spend less on health care.



The Connections project addressed the topic of safety and sustainability in several ways, with a speaker series featuring Art Hushen from the National Institute of Crime Prevention on Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED), with a “Safety Photo booth” at local events, and through conversations with residents during the West Side Comprehensive Plan.

ameliorating the consequences of accidents. If people who learn and practice safe habits at a young





Connections for All Ages

When developing the educational outreach plan for the Connections project, an important goal that we hoped to address was providing options that were appropriate for, interesting to, and desired by residents of all ages.



During the first phase of the Connections project, the Livability Educator, Jaclin DuRant, worked primarily with elementary and middle school aged children at A J Whittenberg elementary school, the Boys and Girls Club, and the city’s community center camps and after school programs. Jaclin worked to develop and implement lessons related to sustainability. During this time, she began creating two curriculum supplement programs designed for use in formal or informal K-12 classrooms, the Urban Naturalist Program and the Community Quest Program.



In order to begin engaging different age groups in the educational programs, Jaclin created some more informal and interactive programs and guides, including the Green Craft Challenge, the Discover Greenville Series, and the “A Tree!” coloring book. Though still targeted towards K-12 students, these programs engage families, get parents involved along with their children, and provide fun and thought provoking activities for all ages.



As the Connections project began transitioning into its final year, the educational outreach programs also transitioned to include more offerings for adults as well as family friendly programs. Though we continued to work with the elementary ages, the educational outreach series we developed and implemented during this time were focused on adult learning. We used comment cards at all of our events to solicit opinions and ideas from our community in order to address topics that people were interested in learning about.

Cinema Movie Series and the Sustainable Conversations Speaker series, were built around the Live, Work, Play, Grow platform to educate and inform the public about a wide variety of issues. We chose to keep the topics for the two series linked, so that a monthly “theme” emerged, providing another layer of structure for the program.

Sustainable Cinema movie night was held the third Monday of every month. The format for Sustainable Cinema included multiple short film clips related to a topic. Generally, the first film defined the issue and subsequent videos either provided more information, varying perspectives, or innovative solutions. The Livability Educator hosted movie nights along with the connections team, framed the issues, facilitated discussion, and introduced community members invited to speak about their work related to the evening’s topic.

Sustainable Conversations, on the other hand, was a more flexible program. Some Sustainable Conversations took place as lunch and learns while others were evening presentations. The speakers that were invited to present were local, regional, and national experts in their fields, and the events ranged from short presentations followed by demonstrations to hour long talks followed by discussion.

In addition to the regular programs, the Connections project hosted spring and fall fairs with a variety of family friendly activities and educational booths. The team carried our message to the community through our own booth at various events, and accepted speaking engagements for a variety of audiences.

Using the comments that we received on comment cards and through our website, we continually worked to refine our process and create topic centered educational events that meet the needs of residents of all ages in our community.

Something for everyone

The connections team worked to create many different educational programs and events to help address the diverse needs of our community.

The two programs that collectively make up the Livability Studio, the Sustainable

Work

Creating more sustainable work environments, developing sustainable connections between work and home, and helping place the tools people need to find and keep jobs in their reach

Sustainable Cinema

Bike Night

This movie night featured videos related to bicycle infrastructure, bike shares, and active transportation systems as a mechanism for revitalizing communities and spurring economic development. Van Whitehead with Upstate Forever shared information about the B-cycle bike share program that was set to launch soon after the event, and Yvonne Reeder, president of the Nicholtown Neighborhood Association spoke about their youth bike program and how it was helping to engage young people in the Nicholtown community.

Eco-entrepreneurship and small green jobs -

This series of videos related to sustainability in business, minority and women who own and operate green businesses, ways that sourcing through local businesses can boost the local economy, and the stories of eco-entrepreneurs who have utilized innovative ideas and approaches to solving environmental and social issues in their communities while growing their businesses.

Sustainable Conversations

Entrepreneurship Panel -

A panel discussion on the challenges of business ownership and the resources available in our community for helping people interested in finding a job or starting their own business featuring:

Bruce Forbes with SHARE, a local expert in matters related to workforce training.

David Esch, local mentor with SCORE, a non-profit organization that pairs new entrepreneurs with successful business leaders.

Latrice Folkes, owner of Lifelt Cafe, a recent small business success story in Greenville.

The Livability Educator

Guest Lectures and Talks-

Livability Educator, Jaclin DuRant, speaks at local schools and for community organizations on a variety of topics.

Jaclin gave a talk during a TEDx Greenville Salon titled "Integrating Sustainability into Education" describing some of her work at A J Whittenberg Elementary School and unique approaches to teaching

Less is More:

The Sustainable Office

Sustainable Spotlight Article

Connections for Sustainability Newsletter 20

Written by Livability Educator, Jaclin DuRant

There are many ways to develop a more sustainable lifestyle at home and on the go, but even folks who are "green" at home may have difficulty maintaining that lifestyle at the office. Switching over from single use products can be a simple, one-item-at-a-time way to begin to develop habits that can save you money and protect the environment while you are at work. Here are some tips on how to start:

Look around your office and see which things you throw away on a regular basis. Ask yourself, is there another option?

- Do you drink coffee? Bring a reusable mug to work. While you're at it, store a small container of creamer in the office fridge and keep a well-sealed jar of sugar at your desk. If there's a coffee station, maybe others would be willing to pitch in to make it a more sustainable space. Getting rid of the single serve sugar and creamer packs and plastic stirring sticks can significantly cut down on the waste your coffee habit generates.

- What about all that plastic silverware? Tuck a reusable fork and spoon in a pouch and keep them in your desk drawer. Wash them at home and bring them back.

- Leftovers from eating out for lunch? Keep a small stash of reusable containers on hand and bring them



Work



sustainability principles as an integrated part of a formal or informal learning environment.

The Clemson University Geology Department hosted Jaclin during a Geology Club meeting where she spoke about local sustainability initiatives in the Upstate including ways that local communities, businesses, and organizations are integrating sustainability and livability principles, from Greenville's electric vehicle ecosystem to the Connections project's BRT feasibility study.

Jaclin partnered with A J Whittenberg Elementary School Librarian, Amanda Leblanc, to offer two half day workshops on integrating sustainability into classroom curriculum for Greenville County School District's summer academy.

Sustainability Spotlight Articles-

Many of the topics for the monthly Sustainability Spotlight column relate to a sustainable work environment. The full text of all of the articles is available on the Livability Educator's page on the Connections project's website.

Example titles include:

"The Triple Bottom Line"

"A Sustainable Back to School"

"Less is More: The Sustainable Office"

and more.

Special Events

Design Workshops for the West Side Comprehensive Plan-

The Connections project staff and the consultant team for the West Side Comprehensive Plan facilitated a series of public meetings during the weeklong design workshop that brought residents and stakeholders from the west side communities to the table to discuss important topics. Some of the workshop topics included:

"Mixed-Use Corridors and Business"

"Economic Development Strategies"

"Churches, Schools, and Civic Buildings"

"Utilities and Infrastructure"

"Streets and Transit"

"Policy and Regulation"



Jaclin DuRant and Amanda Leblanc lead a group of teachers through Linky Stone Children's Garden during Upstate Summer Academy.



Featured Partner: The Salvation Army Kroc Center

The Salvation Army Kroc Center has been the location of many educational outreach events hosted by the Connections for Sustainability project.

The monthly Sustainable Cinema movie nights and Sustainable Conversations speaker series take place at the Kroc Center. The livability educator has also worked with the Kroc Center's Boys and Girls Club during after school and

summer camps to provide educational activities related to sustainability for their members.

Members of the community have expressed an interest in having Connections events at the Kroc Center. The Kroc Center has worked with the Connections project to offer an affordable meeting and event space.

Transportation to and from work is a major concern for many people in Greenville, especially those with low to moderate incomes for whom an automobile is an unsustainable expense. Alternative transportation options such as bus rapid transit, walking paths, greenways, and bicycle infrastructure can improve connections between neighborhoods and jobs, help improve air quality, and encourage personal health and activity. Cities and communities like ours around the nation are changing the way that they think about transportation as we

Active Transportation

Topic Highlight



consider the best ways for moving people instead of just moving automobiles.

We addressed the concept of active and alternative transportation in a variety of ways, through a Sustainable Cinema related to bike infrastructure, and a Sustainable Conversation on Healthy Activity and the Built Environment featuring Dr. Julian Reed, a professor at Furman University. One of the pre-charrette workshops that we hosted during the West Side Comprehensive Planning process included biking and walking tours of the west side and asked residents to share their opinions of the west side from the perspective of a pedestrian or cyclist.

Sustainability Spotlight continued...

to the restaurant to avoid taking home single use to-go boxes that then go directly in the trashcan.

- Bring your lunch in reusable containers.
- Hang onto that reusable water bottle and stay hydrated instead of purchasing less healthy options like soda in single use bottles.
- Save used paper clips, rubber bands, file folders, and other office supplies. There is no reason that these things can't be reused over and over again.
- Skip the paper towels. Hand dryers really do save paper. If your office isn't



equipped with hand dryers, then just take what you need. Instead of four or five paper towels, dry your hands with one.

- Take only what you need. This is a great philosophy to live by! From ketchup packets to business cards and brochures, we throw out much of what we collect on a daily basis without thinking about it. These small things add up, and the best way to avoid ending up with a desk drawer full of useless items that need to be thrown in the trash is to not collect those things in the first place.

In addition to forgoing single use items, there are many ways to be more environmental at work; from turning the lights off

when you leave your office to keeping a live plant on your desk that can brighten up your space and help increase air quality. No matter what you choose to do, it is important to bring a more sustainable mindset to the workplace.

Greenville's bike share program helps provide more sustainable transportation options around downtown.





Event Highlight

Entrepreneurship Panel

When considering long term economic sustainability of a community, it is often remarked that small businesses are of vital importance. Small local businesses create jobs and provide essential goods and services for their community. When these businesses also source their materials locally, hire local workers, and work with other small businesses, the benefits can be compounded many times.



A strong local economy is an essential cog in the wheel of sustainability, and small local businesses are an important aspect of building a strong local economy. Yet, there are many challenges to starting and owning

a business. From writing a business plan to where to locate sources for start-up funds, the questions that a new entrepreneur may have are endless. Residents of a community are the most ideally placed for understanding the needs of their neighbors, and they may have a great idea for a business, but how do they get started?

The Connections for Sustainability project hosted a panel discussion featuring local individuals in the business community with unique perspectives on starting a business to share their stories, advice, and resources with community members. The panel included Bruce

Forbes with SHARE, a local expert in matters related to workforce training, David Esch, local mentor with SCORE, a non-profit organization that pairs new entrepreneurs with successful business leaders, and Latrice Folkes, owner of Lifelt Cafe, a recent small business success story in Greenville.

Bruce Forbes spoke first, providing information about SHARE and the LADDER program which provides job training for low income individuals and people who



may have problems getting a job, such as those with a criminal record. David Esch then shared information about SCORE, a program that connects people interested in starting their own business or who already own their own business with experienced entrepreneurs and successful business owners to provide mentoring and support. Finally, Latrice Folkes told the story of her recent experience, opening Lifelt Café. Latrice shared some of the lessons that she has learned along the way as well as the resources that she utilized to open her own business. Following the panel, audience



members had the opportunity to ask questions, and a lively discussion ensued. All three panel members encouraged audience members to network, plan, ask questions, and above all, persevere and continue working toward their goals.

Reflections from a connections intern

by Emily Hays

As a Sustainability Science major at Furman University, and recently completing a semester abroad in Copenhagen, Denmark, I became curious about urban design, city planning, and community health. I desired to learn more about the ways urban design positively impacts a population's health. Lingered questions that pulled on me centered on the premise of public engagement, specifically, how does planning integrate with behaviors and community desires? This summer I had the opportunity to explore these interests while working for the City of Greenville as an intern with the Connections for Sustainability project. My supervisors were Community Planner, Wayne Leftwich, and Jaclin DuRant, Greenville's Livability Educator. Throughout the summer and into the school year, I have learned about urban design, city and regional planning, and outreach and education.

One aspect of my job as part of the Connections team revolved around education and outreach. Although different from what I anticipated, it has

been something I love. I have worked on several education programs such as The Urban Naturalist and Community Quest. Implementing The Urban Naturalist curriculum at A J Wittenberg Elementary school both over the summer and during the school year has been one of my favorite components of the Connections



Emily works with an urban naturalist student

project. One lesson involves insect collection and identification, and I was surprised when I learned that was on the agenda for the day. My initial reaction was quite similar to what the kiddos thought about it: gross. However, after the kids learn how to use their nets, they eagerly run up, excited to see what they caught. We collected a slew of insects ranging from cicadas, to carpenter bees, to spittle bugs, brought them inside, and observed and identified them. Reactions shifted from disgust to fascination to excitement

as we, mutually, learned about the sheer diversity within the urban environment that we are simply not attuned to when we go about our day. Partaking in that excitement and sharing the joy of learning with children was one of my favorite parts of the Connections project. I have loved seeing the impact of education on children, and it has challenged me to think about how I communicate concepts of sustainability to different audiences.

The summer fellowship at City Hall was an invaluable learning experience for me, so much so that I have continued the experience throughout the 2013-2014 academic school year. Coupled with my interest in urban planning was a pending graduation requirement of a senior thesis, providing the perfect opportunity to combine my interests of design, health, and outreach. I'm currently researching how Southernside residents perceive and utilize the Swamp Rabbit Trail, with an end goal of improving trail access by better understanding benefits and barriers of the Swamp Rabbit Trail in Greenville. The Connections for Sustainability project has provided a tremendous learning environment for me, and I've been extremely thankful for this time to work at City of Greenville, while continuing to pursue my academic interests.

The Connections project is inherently a planning project. Much of the project's focus is on future jobs and economic development. However, our work in the community has helped create connections and networks. Each event we host includes time for questions and discussion. It is common to see people exchanging contact information after these events, having met someone or learned of an organization that may be useful in the attainment of some personal goal. These networks are beneficial for long term economic prosperity, and help strengthen our community by empowering individuals and humanizing organizations.

Connections at Work

by Christa Jordan



In a similar fashion, the Connections project has met and partnered with a local non-profit, the Urban League of the Upstate, to meet a shared goal of increasing the number of gainfully employed west side residents. The Urban League manages a job training

and placement program for the advanced manufacturing sector. Once called Career Skills Now, the project is now termed South Carolina Manufacturing Certification (SCMC). It works with individuals to qualify, prepare, and test into this training program that enjoys a job placement rate of greater than 80%. Starting wages for graduates of this program average \$12/hour, which is more than \$4/hour higher than minimum wage. The Connections team invites SCMC to our community outreach events, refers clients to the program, and has teamed together for some of our community canvassing.

The recycled bottle greenhouse project was an ongoing initiative throughout the 2012-13 school year at A J Whittenberg (AJW) Elementary School of engineering. Spearheaded by the City of Greenville's Livability Educator and funded through a Champions of the Environment grant from SC Department of Health and Environmental Control, the greenhouse is a unique and exciting addition to AJW's outdoor classroom and the school's ever expanding green initiatives.

From the beginning, AJW students, teachers, parents, and community members all participated in the greenhouse project. Classes competed to bring in plastic bottles, racing against each other to see who could keep the most resources out of a landfill. 2nd grade green team students collected the bottles along with the



school's recycling each week while 4th grade green team students worked on the rain barrels that would be attached to the greenhouse.

When it came time to build over 400 students, from Kindergarten to 4th grade, participated in a short lesson on green building with the Livability Educator and then helped put the greenhouse together. The walls, roof,



The Recycled Greenhouse Ribbon Cutting Ceremony

gutters, downspouts, door, and even the decorations on the rain barrel platforms are all made from parts of plastic bottles.



AJW's plastic bottle greenhouse isn't just a greenhouse, it is also a unique example of green building. By utilizing reused materials, passive solar heating in winter, as well as water conservation and protection through rain water collection, the greenhouse has multiple environmentally friendly functions. To recognize the greenhouse project and its unique contributions to the school and the community, the Connections for Sustainability project hosted a special press conference and ribbon cutting ceremony for the recycled bottle greenhouse in the garden at A J Whittenberg Elementary School.

Regional administrators from the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) and the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) toured the Connections project area and were invited to the ribbon cutting. During the ensuing press conference, Stan Meiburg, regional director of the EPA called the Greenhouse a symbol of "how environmental protection and a good quality of life go together."

Following the press conference, the ribbon was cut by local and regional officials including

EPA regional director, Stan Meiburg, regional administrator of HUD, Ed Jennings, Greenville Mayor, Knox White, City Council Members Lillian Brock Flemming and Gaye Sprague, School Board Member Lynda Leventis-Wells, and A J Whittenberg principal, Margaret Thomason.

In order to continue to use the plastic bottle greenhouse as an outreach tool for the greater community, signage was placed in the garden explaining the significance of the project and how the greenhouse, rain barrels, and nearby compost bins work together to address environmental issues in the city. During the school year, students will use the greenhouse to study plant life cycles, germination, the greenhouse effect, and more.



Play

Encouraging fun and healthy lifestyle choices that strengthen community and provide for a high quality of life

Sustainable Conversations

Value of Play

Carly Summers, the Executive Director of the US Play Coalition gave a presentation on the importance of sustaining play throughout life followed by an opportunity for the audience to play with the items from the City of Greenville's new "Mobi-rec" mobile recreation bus.



Eco-friendly Outings on a Budget

Sustainable Spotlight Article

Connections for Sustainability Newsletter 7

Written by Livability Educator, Jaclin DuRant

Have you explored our town? Being sustainable means making choices that are friendly to both our Planet and our Pocketbooks. "Stay-cations" are all the rage these days, but you don't need to hide in the house to have a fabulous inexpensive weekend. Here are a few ideas for some fun Earth friendly activities that won't break the budget here in Greenville.

- Have an old fashioned picnic. Pack your cooler up with some healthy homemade food (in reusable containers) and head out to the local park for a great evening.
- Go for a bike ride. The Swamp Rabbit Trail is a great destination for a little exercise and some family friendly activity.
- Take a hike! Heritage preserves, parks, and other natural areas abound in the upstate. Admission to many of these spots is either cheap or free. Follow the Swamp Rabbit Trail over to Lake Conestee Nature Park for a great place to explore nature for free only 6 miles from downtown.
- Listen to some music. The City of Greenville hosts free live music downtown on Thursdays and Fridays throughout the summer as well as a variety of fun free special events throughout the year.
- Visit a museum. The Greenville County Museum of Art, located at



**Live Healthy,
Play More!**

Turn Lunch Time Into Play Time!

Carly Summers, Executive Director of the US Play Coalition, will lead a lunch discussion on the importance of sustaining play throughout life.

Over the past decades, play has been an underutilized strategy in developing and maintaining health and happiness. We will discuss opportunities for individuals to increase play in their personal life as well as in the life of their communities.

Following light healthy refreshments, we will enjoy recess with toys from the brand new City of Greenville Parks and Recreation mobile bus.

Tuesday, July 16 | 12:00 noon to 1:30 p.m.
Kroc Center | 424 Westfield Street



connections FOR SUSTAINABILITY
Find out more at: **connections.greenvillesc.gov**

City of Greenville | 206 S. Main Street | Greenville, South Carolina 29601 | greenvillesc.gov

Many of the topics that we addressed through our educational outreach programs are interconnected. Healthy activity relates to sustainability in many different ways. Healthy activity encourages active lifestyles, which in turn lead to a healthier community. People engaged in healthy activity are often happier, spend more time outside, and are more involved in community activities. The built environment can encourage or discourage healthy activity through green space, active transportation infrastructure, and other design elements.

Healthy Activity

Topic Highlight



Healthy activity can help prevent and reduce the risk of obesity and related diseases. Communities

that engage in healthy activity together create a safer space through eyes on the street, which in turn, encourages more residents to be active.

We addressed the topic of healthy activity in a variety of ways including the Sustainable Cinema movie nights, “Bike Night,” “The Weight of the Nation,” and “Health and Green Space” as well as with two different speakers, Carly Summers with the US Play Coalition and Dr. Julian Reed with Furman University, and through special events such as the active area at our spring and fall fairs.



The Connections project likes to include fun, healthy activities as part of our educational outreach programs and special events.

Sustainability Spotlight continued...

420 College St, is free to the public. Find quite a few other museums and attractions, as well as the Children’s Garden at Linky Stone Park within walking distance.

- Play a game! When was the last time you played miniature golf? Tennis? Basketball? Frisbee? Disc Golf? Spaces for all of these and more are available at one of Greenville’s city parks.
- Plant a garden. Play in the dirt and reap the benefits of healthy food or beautiful flowers.
- Volunteer: doing something good for your community can be both helpful and fun! Join a river sweep, help cut kudzu, or build a house. Great volunteer opportunities are always available.

Play



Physical Activity and the Built Environment

Dr Julian Reed with Furman University discussed the 2nd year results of his study of the Swamp Rabbit Trail. Dr Reed provided an overview of the demographics of trail users, how these demographics have changed since the first year study, and the economic impact the trail has had on businesses and communities.

The Livability Educator

A Walk in the Woods -

Livability Educator, Jaclin DuRant, writes a photo journal describing her outdoor adventures across the upstate. Through descriptive writing and beautiful photos, Jaclin addresses many issues of sustainability and extols the reader to take their own walk in the woods, encouraging

healthy activity and developing connections with the natural world.

The Walk in the Woods series is posted on the Livability Educator's page on the connections website.

The Green Craft Challenge -

The Livability Educator wrote the Green Craft Challenge program booklet to provide teachers and parents with tools to engage young people in discussion and contemplation of their impact on the waste stream through recycled crafts paired with related issues and challenges.

Crafts and challenges from the program have been utilized as part of the green craft challenge program at A J Whittenberg, and video tutorials made by Jaclin and A J Whittenberg librarian, Amanda Leblanc, are available on the website.



Sustainability Spotlight Articles -

Many of the topics for the monthly sustainability spotlight column relate to play and healthy activity. The full text of all of the articles is available on the Livability Educator's page on the Connections project's website.

Example titles include:

"A More Sustainable Holiday"

"Let's Take A Walk"

"Health and Green space"

and more.

Special Events

Connections at Furman University's Earth Day Festival -

The Connections project hosted a booth at Furman University's Earth Day Festival featuring the livability educator's projects and providing information about the final phases of the project. Jaclin lead an Urban Naturalist guided walk around the Furman Lake, and showed off examples from the Urban Naturalist Program and the Green Craft Challenge, and pictures of the recycled greenhouse project.

The West Side's Got Talent!

Show your skills at the West Side Fall Fair Talent Show!

Got a unique act? Our mystery judges want to see it! Singers, artists, dancers, groups, and more, all are welcome! If you're interested in participating, please contact Christa Jordan at jordane@greenutltesc.gov or 864-967-4428.

November 2, 2013 at the Kroc Center from 11am-2pm

The West Side's Got Talent -

The Connections project hosted a west side talent show during the West Side Fall Fair. The talent show featured 12 performances and a range of ages, groups, and talents. Winners received prize packages donated by local businesses.

Shown left:

Second Place Winners - International Dance Academy, for their La Jarabe Nayarita dance, from the state of Nayarit, Mexico.

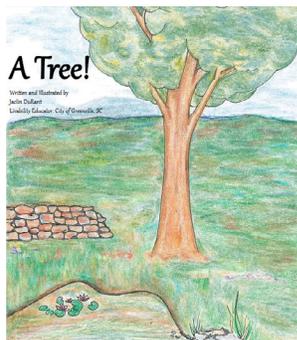
First Place Winner - Warren Jackson, for his exceptional piano playing



Program Highlight

TD Green Streets Grant

The City of Greenville was one of ten municipalities awarded a \$20,000 grant to support urban forestry projects in underserved communities from TD Bank and the Arbor Day Foundation. The TD Green Streets grant program is a component of TD Forests, a North American initiative that protects critical forest habitats equal to the amount of paper the bank uses each year. As part of this program, TD Bank has also committed to reducing its paper usage by 20 percent by 2015. Combined, these programs underscore the bank's commitment to forest protection and stewardship, and are a direct investment in the health of our urban tree canopy.



An important part of Greenville's TD Green Streets grant was an educational component designed to inform the public about the importance and benefits of urban trees. Connections for Sustainability's Livability Educator, Jaclin DuRant, and City Parks Administrator, Dale Westermeier worked to develop and administer a number of educational programs funded by the Green Streets Grant.

Jaclin compiled activities and information related to urban trees to create a curriculum supplement for K-12 educators titled "Greenville's Greener Streets." She also wrote and illustrated a children's story and coloring book, "A Tree!" a story of three friends that improve their neighborhood by planting a tree, learning about proper

tree planting, care, and the benefits that trees provide along the way. Jaclin implemented some of her programming at A J Whittenberg Elementary School and the City's community center summer camps and provided copies of the coloring book to teachers and informal educators throughout the city. All of Jaclin's programs are available on the connections website.



As part of the grant, educational signage was placed around Greenville's west side to inform residents of the value of urban trees. Individual trees were measured and identified. Using that information each tree's impact on storm water runoff reduction, carbon storage, electricity savings, and property value was calculated and written on the signs. The signs, which look like giant price tags, were created through a partnership with Upstate Forever.



Included in the project was funding for City staff to attend national and regional conferences to learn the most up to date tree care information in order to care for 134 street trees that were planted along S. Hudson and surrounding streets in Greenville's west side.



Take A Walk in the Woods with the Livability Educator

The “Walk in the Woods” Photo journal is written by Livability Educator, Jaclin DuRant.

Paris Mountain State Park is an amazing resource for residents of Greenville, SC and the surrounding area. Only 4 miles from downtown Greenville, Paris



Summer wildflowers and their pollinators are sure to impress

Mountain offers an amazing range of recreational and educational opportunities, including fun events like outdoor concerts.

In the summer, you can swim or boat in the lake, and throughout the year, over 15 miles of trails offer a variety of hikes for the experienced or beginner nature enthusiast.

Though I’ve gone on quite a few shorter trips to Paris Mountain, this summer, I decided to take a hike on the park’s longest trail, the 3.6 mile Sulphur Springs loop trail. We have had an extraordinarily

wet summer, with a record breaking amount of rainfall in July, and the trail was predictably muddy to start.

Paris Mountain is a great place to ponder the importance of water. Almost any hike that you take at Paris Mountain will lead you alongside a stream or overlooking a lake. A short way from the start of my hike, I reached Mountain Lake, one of the smaller of the four lakes at the park.

In the late 1800’s and early 1900’s the reservoirs at Paris Mountain supplied the drinking water for the City of Greenville.

In 1918, the City established the “Board of Commissioner of Public Works” and purchased the water



I caught this Ebony Jewelwing damselfly (Calopteryx maculate) in mid-flutter

system from the Paris Mountain Water Company. The City was a very different place then, but it’s easy to imagine that the ability to capture drinking water in so close by would have been a boon to early Greenvillians. Luckily, soon after, the Greenville Water System began the process of acquiring and protecting the drinking water reservoir of Table Rock which is still in use today.

As I hike, I am amazed by the diversity of fungi, plants, and insects that inhabit the forest floor. One particular interesting plant is the Crane-fly Orchid (*Tipularia discolor*). Like many orchids, this plant has specialized

structures called pollinaria that contain pollen grains and attach to pollinators. In the case of the Crane-fly Orchid, the pollinaria attach to the eyes of visiting moths and are then transported to the next Crane-fly Orchid that the moth visits, helping the plant reproduce. The flower stalks of the Crane-fly Orchid are distinctive, with long spindly petals



Calostoma cinnabarinum is an odd little puffball mushroom that emerges from a gelatinous veil



A Crane-fly Orchid at Paris Mountain



A fern frond alongside a stream at Paris Mountain



A flat-backed millipede travels along the forest floor

reminiscent of the animal that the plant is named after, and no leaves are present when the flower is blooming.

In addition to an abundance of flowers, the rainy summer has brought about a high diversity of insects, mushrooms, and other organisms. Alongside of the trail, I had the luck to spot a beautiful red and black striped millipede. Unlike their venomous cousins, the centipede, millipedes are not predaceous, but some do secrete a cyanide toxin from their skins, deterring predators. Millipedes and other decomposers eat fallen leaves and other detritus on the forest floor and are essential to many forest systems.

The Sulphur Springs trail winds through a variety of ecosystems, allowing plenty of time for contemplation, and lots of opportunities to see different types of plants and animals. If a 4 mile hike is too much for you, consider one of the Park's shorter trails, or just come for a picnic. An entry fee of only \$2 per adult makes Paris Mountain State Park a fantastically affordable and fun place to take a walk in the woods.



Take a walk in the woods on the Swamp Rabbit Trail...



in SC state parks and national forests...



through heritage preserves and along mountain trails...



even in downtown Greenville, Jaclin finds places to walk in the woods...



visit connections.greenvillesc.gov for more.

Grow

Providing tools to promote and encourage healthy and sustainable community growth and economic development

Sustainable Cinema

Health and Green space -

Featuring videos discussing the connections between health and access to green space. David Taylor spoke about the Nicholtown and Sterling community "Spinners" bike clubs for underserved youth, and Jaclin DuRant gave a brief overview of recent research linking access to green space with a variety of health and societal benefits.

Pocket Neighborhoods-

Ross Chapin presented the theory of pocket neighborhoods and how this development idea can address many of the environmental and social concerns in urban neighborhoods as an aspect of urban revitalization and infill development.

Health and Green Space

Sustainable Spotlight Article

Connections for Sustainability Newsletter 18

Written by Livability Educator, Jaclin DuRant

My father always says, "If you don't have good health, you don't have anything." Without good health, it's difficult to enjoy a high quality of life. There's no question that there are a myriad of things that contribute to or detract from a person's mental, physical, and social health and well-being including what we eat, where we live, and even how much green space we have in our lives.

Green space refers to areas within a city or town that are planted and set aside for use as parks, gardens, trails, and conservation. Recent research into the connections between health and green space has shown that access, availability, and use of green space have impacts on many different aspects of our health.

Studies of laboratory and zoo animals show that when these animals are placed in over-crowded, degraded habitats, the social interactions between individuals become more aggressive. In essence, without a healthy habitat, animals can get mean and depressed. The same thing can be said about humans. Research shows that people need a certain amount of green space in order to maintain healthy social interactions.

In addition to social structure, access to and use of green space has been linked to a variety of mental and physical health benefits. One study showed that children in areas with more green space had lower rates of obesity. Another study showed higher death rates in areas with less green space, especially from cardiovascular diseases. Patients with both ADHD

MAJORA CARTER

Eco-entrepreneur | Urban revitalization strategist | Peabody Award winning radio broadcaster



I believe that you shouldn't have to leave your neighborhood to live in a better one.
Majora Carter

Home(town) Security

Monday, November 18

6:30 to 8:00 pm
Kroc Center

Majora Carter founded Sustainable South Bronx in 2001, when very few people were even talking about "sustainability." Today, vision and leadership are at the heart of her public radio series, *The Promised Land*, which introduces listeners to passionate men, women and young people who are changing their communities with innovative thinking and intelligent effort. This **FREE** event will explore how we strengthen our community at the neighborhood and local business levels.



Sustainable Conversations

What's Planning got to do with it -

A special multi-speaker sustainable conversation featuring Tripp Muldrow of Arnett Muldrow and Mary Douglas Hirsch, the City of Greenville's Downtown Manager. Tripp's presentation featured the importance of planning in neighborhood revitalization, and Mary Douglas gave a dynamic photo filled presentation on how Greenville's downtown has changed over the years.

Home(town) Security -

Majora Carter of the Majora Carter Group in New York, gave a talk about her process, urban revitalization, and ways to improve neighborhoods for the people that live in them.



continued.....

Grow



Guest Lectures and Talks-

The Connections project team speaks at local schools and for community organizations on a variety of topics.

Livability Educator, Jaclin DuRant, has given lectures and talks on the concept of green building and the importance of integrating sustainability into development. She has been invited to present these concepts as a lecture to college students at Furman University, high school students at Greenville Technical College's Charter High School, and staff and students at Greenville Technical College.

Wayne Leftwich, Community Planner and lead on the Connections project, spoke at the South Carolina American Planning Association conference about the importance of strong community engagement and outreach and the Connections project's outreach process.

Christa Jordan, the Connections project's grant coordinator, spoke to Greenville's garden club about the importance of native plants in landscapes and gardens.

Sustainability Spotlight Articles-

Many of the topics for the monthly sustainability spotlight column relate to sustainable growth and development. The full text of all of the articles is available on the Livability Educator's page on the Connections project's website.

Example titles include:

"Making a TREEmendous Difference"

"Harvesting the Power of the Sun"

"Save a Fish, Plant a Tree"

and more.

Featured Partner - Gardening for Good

Gardening for Good is a local non profit community garden network. Reece Lyerly, Gardening for Good's director has worked with the Connections project in many ways. As a focus team member, booth holder at the Spring and Green fair, a speaker for Sustainable Cinema, and a partner with the school

garden at A J Whittenberg Elementary, Reece has been an important force in the community engagement and educational outreach portions of the Connections project.

Special Events

Safe Cities

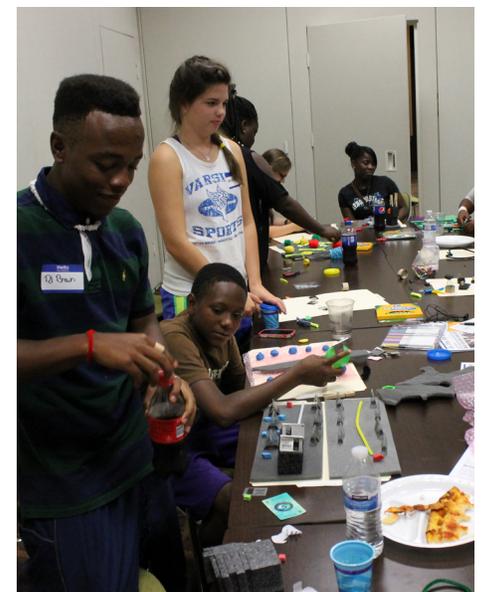
The Connections project held a booth at the Safe Cities event hosted by the Greenville Police department that provided information about the West Side Comprehensive Plan and the work accomplished during the Connections project.

Leadership Clinic

A leadership clinic with Majora Carter of the Majora Carter Group brought 34 community leaders together to discuss ideas and learn Majora's process of taking an idea and turning it into a successful project. Neighborhood association presidents, non profit organization leaders, city staff, and others came together to share ideas and resources under Majora's expert guidance.

Teen Pizza Planning Party

During the West Side Comprehensive Planning process, members of the connections team hosted a Pizza Planning Party for teenagers. The pizza party featured getting to know you ice breakers, a Q and A session with the teens to get their inside knowledge of the good and bad things in their neighborhoods, and a modeling exercise.



When planning a vacation, you may create a list of places you want to see and then figure out what you need to do in order to get to those places. Similarly, planning for development is an extremely important aspect of sustainability. Just like your vacation plan, development plans help to identify community goals and propose ways we can reach those goals. As part of the Connections project, we worked with residents and stakeholders to create many different plans, but the planning itself wasn't enough. We also created educational outreach events about planning

Planning

Topic Highlight



to help people understand what was happening and why it was important.

We addressed the topic of planning through the Sustainable Conversations panel presentation "What's Planning got to do with it?" and through many special events. The Connections project took aspects of the various plans we were involved in to many community events, hosted a section on the West Side Comprehensive Plan at the West Side Fall Fair, worked with residents during charettes to help people understand the process, hosted a teen Pizza Planning Party, and developed a newspaper, the West Side Connection, to help get the word out about planning events.

sustainability spotlight continued...

and Alzheimer's disease have showed increased cognitive functions following time spent in nature. People who spend time outdoors can expect to see a range of health improvements, from better concentration, reduced stress, and memory retention to better cardiovascular health, and lower rates of respiratory disease, migraines, intestinal complaints, and more.



It's easy to equate the health benefits of green space with exercise, but a recent study done in Japan suggests that more than just the physical activity is important. This experiment showed that after a 30 minute walk in a forest, blood glucose levels of diabetics dropped much more than it did following other types of exercise,

even 3 hours of cycling. For years, nature enthusiasts, writers, and others have been saying that nature is an important part of our quality of life. Now, researchers are seeing that green space may be more important than many ever thought, helping to keep our society, our bodies, and our minds functioning well.

Greenville is a beautiful city, and we are lucky that many here already understand the importance of protecting and setting aside natural areas in our city. The next time you get the chance, take a walk around a park or just sit outside beneath a tree and relax. It's good for your health.

"In every walk with nature, one receives far more than he seeks." – John Muir

Community members help plan a potential park on Greenville's west side.





Event Highlight

West Side Fall Fair

As the Connections project entered its final phase, the creation of the West Side Comprehensive Plan, we wanted to host an educational and outreach event that would bring all of the many pieces of our puzzle together and be a celebration for the neighborhoods. So, we created the West Side Fall Fair.

As we plan for the future, it is important to understand the past. The west side has a rich history, and we wanted to celebrate that and provide opportunities for neighborhood residents to tell their stories, so we included a history component with the fair. Included in the fair's "Heritage Corner" was a living history presentation by A J Whittenberg



Elementary School students, a booth featuring memorabilia from the Shoeless Joe Jackson museum, a presentation by Don Koonce with the Textile Heritage Society, a booth showing photos of how Greenville has changed over the years, and more.

A section of the fair was also dedicated to displaying the most current information on the West Side Comprehensive Plan

and the other materials created as part of the Connections project. Educational booths related to sustainability provided fun activities and information for residents of all ages including highlights like the Children's Museum of the

Upstate's finger stamping craft, the City Recycling coordinator's toilet paper roll owl magnet crafts, and Greenville Technical College's CPR demonstrations.

The "It's a TREEmendous Day in the City" celebration of urban trees took up one whole corner of the fair across from café style seating and a wonderful healthy lunch buffet provided by the Kroc center. City Parks and Recreation's Mobi-rec bus set up an active play area outside that was a big hit with the younger generation.



We capped it all off with the "West Side's Got Talent" talent show featuring 12 acts that showcased an impressive range of talents from hip-hop dance to violin.

The West Side Fall Fair provided neighborhood residents with a chance to learn, to celebrate where they have come from, to display and encourage their talents, to meet and greet with their neighbors, to provide input on plans for their neighborhood's development, and most importantly, to have a fantastic time as a community. The fair was a huge success!



For our November outreach program, we invited Majora Carter, of the Majora Carter Group, to Greenville. While she was here, Majora engaged 34 community members in a leadership clinic, walking them through her process for taking an idea and turning it into a successful project and then facilitating a discussion amongst the group about ways to begin working to meet the needs of our community. A diverse group of leaders of all ages attended the clinic, including non-profit workers, neighborhood association presidents, city staff, and more.

Majora Carter

Speaker Highlight



During the evening, Majora was our sustainable conversation series guest speaker. Over 70 residents

came to the event to hear her story. Majora's talk, Home(town) Security, detailed the process that she went through in her home town to facilitate the creation of a waterside park, and highlighted some of the ways that her group is working to help encourage economic diversity in poor neighborhoods. One of her slogans, that you "shouldn't have to move away to live in a better place" resonated well with our audience, and the theme of working locally to solve local problems also spoke to many of the audience members.



Connections for Sustainability