

# Sustainably Built Community

*Activities:*

## Creating Pathways To Greener Futures



### **Disadvantaged Youth Mentored While Learning Skills for Green Jobs**

*March 2018* - Green Technical Education & Employment (Green Tech) was established in 2008 to provide career technical education with an emphasis on environmental protection to youth and young adults from disadvantaged communities. Since its inception, Green Tech has reached more than 400 students in various career training and STEM activities including solar training, agri-business, pre-apprentice construction and computer programming.

Many Green Tech students experience traumatic life experiences prior to entering Green Tech programming. Here's a real-life example of how Green Tech provides more than just training and opportunities for inclusion amid a home life filled with economic challenges, criminal and gang activity, and dysfunctional families with few supportive and positive role models.

In 2015, two friends joined the Green Tech program together. From the beginning, behavior and attitude issues surfaced from showing up late to scheduled classroom training, disruptive conversations taking place during teaching presentations and in some instances, not showing up at all for program participation. Executive Director Simeon Gant continued to talk with these two young men about being a responsible dependable program participant in showing up on-time for each training day scheduled and being respectful to trainers and other participants in the program by not talking while presentations were being given and working cooperatively in a team environment. However, after repeated violations of program policies and rules, the disruptive behavior began to negatively impact program training days and the two friends were both expelled from the Green Tech program.

A year went by and one of the friends requested admittance back into the program. He showed promise and a renewed commitment to be a productive program participant. His choice to return was not easy; and in the face of being lured into fast money through criminal activity and influenced to engage in illegal substance abuse, he remembered the long talks with Simeon Gant of personal conduct, self-respect and good judgment when faced with hard decisions. The safe space and positive reinforcement he experienced at Green Tech lead him to graduate from high school and become a responsible adult, leading his family and to this day continues to be a conscientious program participant. He now serves as a positive role model for new students entering the Green Tech program.

The other friend has not been so lucky. His journey led him down a path all too common among boys and men of color in struggling communities with few support mechanisms. His decisions led to criminal activity resulting in an eight-year prison sentence. He had the same opportunity to return to Green Tech to gain workforce skills, on-the-job experience and program employment.

Green Tech continues to provide supportive workforce development to more than 30 youth per year within its Teaching Urban Farming, Forestry and Aquaponics (TUFFA) program, computer coding program, Green Tech Tours, Solar Technology, Energy Auditing, pre-apprentice construction and general workforce training every week throughout the city of Sacramento.

**For more information and to learn how to support Green Tech please visit: <http://www.greentechedu.org>**

## Education

*Activities:*

## Sac State Students Serve in the Promise Zone



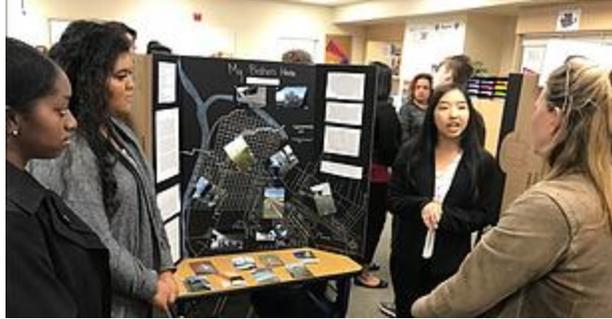
### Teacher Prep Programs Provide Support to Over 50% of Promise Zone Schools

*March 2018* - Sacramento State is proud to be a partner and leader in the Sacramento Promise Zone. The University has intentionally committed its resources, faculty, staff, and students to lead and support a variety of partnerships that are resulting in positive changes and improving lives within the Promise Zone. One example of our commitment to long-term impact in the Promise Zone is through our robust STEM pipeline and teacher preparation programs. In the past three years, Sacramento State students have provided after school tutoring, student teaching, or school counselor internships in over 50% of schools serving the Promise Zone. This allows these Promise Zone schools to have additional resources at the school, while encouraging Sacramento State graduates to begin their careers at schools that serve the Promise Zone. This work is supported by the more than \$11 million Sacramento State has received in grant funding to benefit Promise Zone schools and neighborhoods.

One example is Laureen Riddick, Science teacher at Smythe Academy in the Promise Zone. Ms. Riddick earned her bachelor's degree in biology, a teaching credential, and a master's degree, all from Sacramento State. An outstanding student and educator, she was selected to receive a scholarship from the National Science Foundation and serve as a Noyce Scholar, with a focus on increasing k-12 student success in the STEM fields. Now, with this incredible background, Ms. Riddick has chosen to teach at Smythe Academy, where she teaches science and serves as an advisor for the AVID program, working with Promise Zone students to provide mentorship toward success in middle school, high school, and college, and beyond!

**For more information on Sacramento State and their role in the Sacramento Promise Zone, please visit <http://csus.edu/promisezone/index.html>.**

### High School Students Present Their “Y-Plan” for Change



## Students gain college and job skills while tackling real-world problems

On Friday, February 23, 2018, community partners including Sacramento Promise Zone, Sacramento Housing and Redevelopment Agency, The California Endowment, Office of Mayor Darrell Steinberg, Health Education Council, and Center for Cities + Schools were invited to Health Professions High School to hear Y-Plan projects focused on homelessness presented by sophomores. Y-Plan (Youth – Plan, Learn, Act, Now) is an educational strategy that empowers young people to tackle real-world problems in their communities through project-based civic learning experiences. The 52 students who participated in the Y-Plan project spent a month researching and brainstorming ideas that could help support homelessness in their communities.

Students explained the process of their research by taking a walk in their neighborhood to observe and analyze the surroundings. They took their observation and researched it more thoroughly. Then they created an action plan for change. Next they go public by presenting their idea to the community. Lastly, community partners respond to students projects. Y-Plan has allowed students to critically identify places and or things in their community that could be changed or added to support homelessness. Students also gained self-growth through the Y-Plan project because they learned the difficulty of research and the importance of patience working in a group.

All Y-Plan projects were incredible because it showed youth community engagement and youth voice. A student expressed that before they participated in the Y-Plan project homelessness didn't seem like a big problem but after discovering that they could develop ideas to support it they started to care more about the problem. Y-Plan supports the Sacramento Promise Zone goals because it's engages student learning by connecting real-world problems to their education. This will increase students reading and writing skill because they're enjoying their learning. Lastly, it provides a space for community partners to hear youth voice and take what they've learned back to their organizations to create change.

To learn more about Y-Plan and how you bring it to your school, please visit <https://y-plan.berkeley.edu/>.

## Health

### *Activities:*

# WEHL Program Graduation

*WEHL program graduates & partner organization staff: (front, left-right) Ayesha Strong, Litiane Lam Yuen, Stephanie Holcomb, Shirley "Nani" Salsedo. (Back, left-right) Urban Strategies, Inc. Associate Project Manager Edward Lewis, Dorothy Pleasant, Carolyn Williams, Urban Strategies, Inc. Regional VP Isaac Dozier, Reginald Foster, Frances Cervantes, Urban Strategies, Inc. Educational Specialist Brenna Lammerding and SHRA Executive Director LaShelle Dozier.*

*Samuel Merritt University's Community Nurse Corps (CNC) nurse scholars who provided support to the success of this cohort of the WEHL program.*

## **Public Housing Residents Graduate with Health Knowledge and Power to Advocate**

Residents from Twin Rivers Public Housing graduated from the “With Every Heartbeat is Life (WEHL)” program on Friday, February 23rd at Samuel Merritt University. The WEHL program is an educational and workforce training provided by Urban Strategies, Inc. onsite at Twin Rivers Public Housing Community. Residents who took advantage of this opportunity became well informed about health and ways to live a healthier lifestyle. This opportunity also enabled residents to support each other in ending unhealthy habits and forming healthier ones. The 6th WEHL Cohort program was led by Peer Health Coordinator Frances Cervantes, herself a WEHL program graduate, from the 4th WEHL Cohort.

The WEHL program teaches residents about healthy living through common health practices and interventions. These practices and interventions were smoking cessation, physical activity, diabetes education and management, mindfulness as well as being health advocates for their families and community. At the end of the 10-week program, graduates earned a certificate of participation that supports job opportunities in the health/medical field such as medical assistants, community health educators and potentially an interest in pursuing higher education for upper level industry related careers. This outcome also supports one of the Sacramento Promise Zones health goals to increase access to health career pathways for Promise Zone residents.

At the end of the WEHL graduation ceremony, graduates of the program mentioned that they were grateful for this opportunity and are excited to now lead healthier lifestyles which includes a daily/or weekly walking group with their peers within the Twin Rivers community. To learn more about the WEHL program and its positive impact on public housing residents, please visit the link [here](#).