



## *Sustainability Newsletter Summer 2015*

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### **Message from the Director: Erick Shambarger**



Environmental sustainability is about developing our economy to meet the needs of people today, while protecting the environment to support long-term economic success. In a world that has limited natural resources, there are *unlimited opportunities* to find more creative and sustainable ways for meeting our needs and shaping Milwaukee into a healthier and more prosperous place. I'm proud of the efforts the City has made under the leadership of Mayor Barrett, the Common Council, the Office of Environmental Sustainability and other city departments to pursue innovative programs and policies that support a sustainable future. I'm also inspired by the leading edge work of Milwaukee's universities, entrepreneurs and

established companies, non-profit groups, schools, MMSD, the Water Council, Midwest Energy Research Consortium, and individuals who actively pursue the "sustainability opportunity." You, too, have the opportunity to shape a more sustainable future for your family, friends, organization, and community. Every month, I will share ideas on how you can contribute to a more sustainable Milwaukee through a new blog.

Going forward, we will continue to use [Refresh Milwaukee](#) as a roadmap to making Milwaukee the "Fresh Coast Capital of North America." We will continue our award-winning programs like [Milwaukee Energy Efficiency \(Me<sup>2</sup>\) program](#), [HOME GR/OWN](#), [Milwaukee Shines](#) solar program, and [ME3](#) sustainable manufacturing program, and our innovative [green infrastructure policies](#). These efforts are making a real difference, sometimes in plain sight and sometimes within the walls of our built environment and manufacturing plants. You can see the difference at the new [Sunshine Park on 14<sup>th</sup> and North Avenue](#), the [Solar Flower](#) in the Green Corridor, the [Port of Milwaukee Wind Turbine](#), and solar panels that will be installed on homes through our [Solar East Side](#) group buy program. But our impact is also felt in homes, businesses, and government buildings where we are reducing energy costs and our environmental footprint. As a result of the City's and [OES intervention](#) in the We Energies rate case, the City will save taxpayers approximately \$700,000 annually on our electricity bill for streetlights. OES is also planning a new [comprehensive energy efficiency program](#) for commercial buildings that will be rolled out later this year. Milwaukee's accomplishments and our outreach to national and global networks are helping Milwaukee build a global reputation for sustainability.

The Office of Environmental Sustainability is a small office of five people, but the City has ambitious sustainability goals. To get there, we need to leverage the talents and resources of people and institutions who share our goals. To that end, OES will build partnerships to deliver positive results for the community. I look forward to working with you on building a more sustainable and prosperous Milwaukee.

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## Partners for Places & HOME GR/OWN Update



Mayor Barrett welcomes the crowd at the first P4P park grand opening on July 31st. Sunshine Park, located on a main thoroughfare of the city, opened with rave reviews!

The primary [HOME GR/OWN](#) project of 2015, *Partners for Places (P4P)*, is underway and 6 new pocket parks and 15 new fruit orchards are being built on formerly vacant lots across Milwaukee's North Side this year. The goal is to turn community liabilities into community assets that are built and maintained by the community. This project began with a conversation between Will Allen of Growing Power and OES' HOME GR/OWN Program Manager, Tim McCollow, 18 months ago and has grown into a broad partnership between the Community Development Alliance, the Greater Milwaukee Foundation, Bloomberg Philanthropies, the Mayor's Strong Neighborhoods Plan and Department of City Development. HOME GR/OWN coordinated professional design services from the UWM School of Architecture and Urban Planning Community Design Solutions (CDS) with input from the community through neighborhood workshops. This coordination ensures that resident's voices are

heard and accounted for in the parks and orchards locations and designs.

The parks will be built by Walnut Way's Blue Skies Landscaping and many of the orchards will be built by Groundwork Milwaukee's Green Team, creating construction jobs for residents of these same neighborhoods.

Besides attractive site designs, nearly all of the sites will have apple, plum and cherry trees, donated by Stark Nursery. Growing Power will be planting the trees and David J Frank Landscaping has donated staff time and equipment to dig the hundreds of tree holes. The sites chosen are predominately in the 6th, 7th and 15th aldermanic districts - the areas hardest hit by foreclosures. Our neighborhood partners include the Dominican Center, Metcalfe Park BNCP, Riverworks and others.

HOME GR/OWN has also been selected as a Finalist for an international "[Places by Design](#)" design contest sponsored by SXSW Eco - an off-shoot conference sponsored by the giant SXSW (South by Southwest) conference. HOME GR/OWN is helping to raise Milwaukee's national reputation for environmental sustainability. The pocket parks and orchards being built through HOME GR/OWN are also helping Milwaukee live up to its designation as a [Biophilic City](#).

*This project is funded in part through a City of Milwaukee grant of federal community development funds, a Bloomberg Award for Partners for Places - a project of the Funders' Network for Smart Growth and Livable Communities, and also through the support of our additional, wonderful partners, including:*



## Solar East Side Brings Neighbors Together to Invest in Solar



The [Solar East Side group buy](#), sponsored by OES's [Milwaukee Shines](#) program and the Midwest Renewable Energy Association (MREA), is helping Milwaukee's East Side home and business owners invest in solar energy. A solar group buy is an organized approach that helps a neighborhood use its collective buying power to reduce the cost for solar on individual properties. Milwaukee Shines and the MREA hosted ten public information sessions from May through July and also spoke with residents at Alderman

Kovac's town hall meeting. At the informational sessions, Milwaukee Shines educated attendees about how solar works, how much it costs, market trends, what they could expect from their solar installation. Attendees also got to meet the solar installer for the East Side program - Arch Electric. Information sessions were held at the Urban Ecology Center, the East Side Library, Colectivo, Nick's House bar, UWM's INOVA Gallery and City Hall. Solar East Side follows other successful group buy efforts in Riverwest, Bayview, Layton Boulevard West, and Washington Heights.

### Deadline to Participate:

Due to the overwhelming interest in the Solar East Side program, the deadline to sign up has been extended from August 31st to **September 15th!** Interested participants must have their site assessments complete prior to September 15th and inform Arch Electric if they plan on installing solar. While marketing for the program has been targeted to the East Side, the program is available to anyone in the City of Milwaukee.

As of August 17th, the Solar East Side program has reached **50 kW of installed solar!** This means that each property owner that installers solar through the program will get a volume discount on their purchase.

Brought to you by:



**Thanks to all of our promotional partners!**

Colectivo Coffee, Riverwest Coop Alliance, 91.7 WMSE, The East Side BID, UW-Milwaukee, Milwaukee Public Library, the Urban Ecology Center, INOVA Gallery, Alderman Nik Kovac



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## Water Education Day

On Tuesday July 28<sup>th</sup>, OES hosted our first ever Water Education Day. We partnered with *I Have a Dream Milwaukee*, which was launched in 2008 at Clarke Street School by Mayor Tom Barrett and other supporters. The program is driven by individuals and public and private sector organizations committed to helping children from low-income backgrounds achieve a higher education.

Our first stop was a picnic lunch in HOME GR/OWN's Ezekiel Gillespie Park. This park has a number of green infrastructure technologies including a rainwater cistern, permeable pavers and bioswales. OES staff talked to the Dreamers about storm water management and how green infrastructure in parks can help control the flow of water into our sewers during a heavy rain.



Our next stop was a water lesson at Urban Ecology Center (UEC) in Riverside Park. UEC educator Sam gave the kids a tour of the Center, talked about how they harvest rainwater to flush their toilets and have a rainwater pond, the kids got to see animals that live in Milwaukee Rivers and the Lake and then we ended our time at UEC by working on a giant puzzle of the City, our Rivers and Lake Michigan.

Our final stop for our water education day was a trip to McKinley beach to see Lake Michigan. The Dreamers got to wade in the water while Sam from UEC talked about the importance of maintaining a healthy and clean lake.



Overall we had a fun and educational day and were so happy to partner with the amazing kids from I Have a Dream. A special thanks goes out to the Friends of Hank Aaron State Trail for donating water bottles to all the Dreamers!

Everyone learned something new about water in Milwaukee and we can't wait for the second annual OES water education day next year!

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## Cream City Farms

OES has been working with numerous partners on a unique community food project - the creation of a new 1.3 acre urban farm on top of an old manufacturing site at 30th & Brown in the 30th Street Corridor.

HOME GR/OWN and Milwaukee Shines have been working with major partners City DCD & RACM, the Mayor's Strong Neighborhoods Plan, MMSD, ReFlo, GZA, Arts @Large, UW-County



Extension and farmer David Johnson to renovate this site. A new stone cap and fresh soil have been brought in to provide a healthy growing medium. MMSD helped fund a 40,000 gallon cistern to harvest and use rainwater and help prevent area flooding. David plans a late summer crop this year after the artistic fencing is complete.



Farmer David Johnson assists Mayor Tom Barrett in planting a tomato plant | An overview of the Farm | Volunteers help assemble the Aqua Blox for the cistern | Mayor Barrett and Dave Misky from RACM assemble Aqua Blox.

## Earn and Learn Student, Ayanna Ellzey, Discusses what Sustainability Means to Her



Ayanna is going to be a senior at Rufus King high school.

OES participates in Mayor Barrett's *Earn and Learn* program to give area high school students real world work experience. Here, OES's 2015 participant describes what "Sustainability" means to her.

We hear the words 'sustainable' and 'sustainability' almost every time the subject of 'being green' comes up. But what does it mean exactly? Sustainability could be defined as an ability or capacity of something to be maintained or to preserve itself. In essence it is to collect what is necessary for us to survive now, without making it impossible for our descendants to survive in the same way. Living sustainably is about living within by the limits of our environment. It's really about thinking about where your food, clothes, energy and other products come from and deciding whether you should buy and consume these things. Our way of life is progressively placing an increasing amount of pressure on our environment and there are more and more opportunities for Milwaukee citizens to participate.

By implementing the idea of sustainable behavior into our daily lives we help more than just ourselves. Sustainable living creates jobs, it creates better, cleaner neighborhoods, and in the end is way less costly and can actually make you money. Sustainability is not about a paranoid fear of a dystopian future for our world. Sustainability is about cherishing what we have been given, being smarter about our consumer choices, and searching for new solutions to old global problems. One can apply sustainability to every field whether it be economics, society, politics and our natural environment. We all have a part to play in making our world more sustainable. To me, sustainability means living so that what we expend does not greatly exceed what we contribute. It is to look after our world so that our world can continue to look after us. In a sustainable world, there is a peaceful and flourishing balance between the Earth and all of its people.

Through the Earn and Learn program I have gotten the chance to work with city officials whose core purpose is to make our city- and ultimately our world- a better and healthier place to live. My experience at the Office of Environmental Sustainability has truly lived up to the program name. I have earned a newfound respect for all that the City does, and learned so much about how we are moving forward to refresh our city.

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## Teacher Education Day: Working to improve Energy Engagement in

## the classroom!

On August 26th, OES is partnering with the [Wisconsin K-12 Energy Education Program \(KEEP\)](#), and the Port of Milwaukee to educate area teachers on the energy efficiency and renewable energy efforts of the City of Milwaukee, so they can take those lessons back to the classroom. The session is booked, but teachers who interested in future events or learning more about KEEP are encouraged to contact [Sara Windjue](#).

### Visit the Wind Turbine at the Port of Milwaukee!

Learn about the 100 KW wind turbine and how it has generated over 300,000 kWh of clean power and saved over \$35,000 in energy costs. Walk away with renewable-energy related hands-on activities to integrate into your programming.

This professional development opportunity is brought to you in partnership by the City of Milwaukee Office of Environmental Sustainability, the Port of Milwaukee, and the Wisconsin K-12 Energy Education Program (KEEP).

- August 26, 2015
- 1-3 p.m.
- Space is limited to the first 20 educators

Produced under a 2015-2016 grant from the Wisconsin Environmental Education Board.



Wisconsin K-12 Energy Education Program (KEEP)  
College of Natural Resources  
University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point



**THE PORT OF  
MILWAUKEE**



*Made possible by a 2015-2016 grant from the Wisconsin Environmental Education Board.*

## Milwaukee's Newest Solar Install is Hard to Miss



On Friday May 8th, Milwaukee Shines, Alderman Terry Witkowski, Bryan Simon of the Green Corridor and Simon Landscaping and the Garden District Neighborhood Association unveiled Milwaukee's newest solar installation - the solar flower - at the Garden District Farmers' Market and Community Gardens.

Funded by a grant from Milwaukee Shines, the solar flower will power outlets in stalls at the farmers' market and will power the pump that provides the community gardens with water from the rainwater stream.

The 1.5 kW solar flower is just one of the many green features in the Green Corridor. Other features include green infrastructure to capture and manage storm water runoff, solar-powered pedestrian crossing signs and a solar-lighted bus shelter, an urban orchard, a recycled rainwater stream and community gardens.

Check out the solar flower for yourself by visiting the [Garden District farmers' market!](#)

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## Employee Profile: Tim McCollow

Tim is the project manager for Milwaukee's HOME GR/OWN initiative. He comes to his work in community food systems through a non-traditional path. Trained as a zoologist & environmental/energy analyst, having spent over 2 decades managing natural gas purchasing and risk management for We Energies prior to starting in the City's Office of Environmental Sustainability in 2010. As part of a City/CBO team, he helped to develop Mayor Tom Barrett's HOME GR/OWN Initiative. Tim also serves on the Steering Committees for the Milwaukee Food Council and the Institute for Urban Agriculture & Nutrition.



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## Employee Profile: Elizabeth Hittman

Elizabeth Hittman coordinates OES's solar program, Milwaukee Shines and is working to make it easier for home and business owners in Milwaukee to install solar. Elizabeth also works on green infrastructure and sustainable water projects with the goal of establishing Milwaukee as America's Water-Centric City. Elizabeth received her undergraduate degree in Natural Resource Management from UW-Stevens Point and a master's degree from UW-Milwaukee in Urban Geography. Elizabeth also serves on the Board of Directors of the Milwaukee Environmental Consortium and the Midwest Renewable Energy Association and recently joined the UW-Milwaukee School of Freshwater Sciences Professional Science Master's Advisory Board.



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## Employee Profile: Angela Mitchell

Angela was selected to serve as a Management Trainee to facilitate community outreach, engagement, and stakeholder relations management. With a Bachelor's degree in Business from Cardinal Stritch University. Angela brings a solid understanding of urban economics and strategic planning and has a demonstrated history of establishing and maintaining collaborative relationships with individuals from various sectors including business, community groups and organizations. She exhibits a passion and enthusiasm that focuses on the needs of under-served communities and vulnerable populations as it relates to improving their quality of life. Currently, Angela is pursuing her MBA and will graduate in May 2016.



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## Other News & Events

### Zumba in the Park!

Be a part of fitness in the heart of a neighborhood... Join us for a fun-filled Zumba dance exercise class at the award-winning Ezekiel Gillespie Park, located on the corner of 14th & Wright St. Must be 18 and older participate. This event is FREE and open to the public!

**When:** August 22nd, 2015, 12:30pm - 2:00pm

**Where:** Ezekiel Gillespie Park, corner of North 14th & Wright St.

**What To Bring:** Tennis Shoes & Water

### Mid-West Energy Research Consortium is hosting a Demo Day!

Interested in a fun evening of networking, food, drinks, and presentations? Then join us along with graduates of **WERCBench**, a new program designed especially for engineering and hardware-oriented business start-ups. This event wraps up an initial 12-week technology-immersive, mentor-driven program for early stage start-ups and is sponsored in part by OES.

**When:** Thursday, August 27, 2015, 5:00pm - 8:00pm

**Where:** Harley-Davidson Museum, 400 W. Canal Street

For more information, please contact [wercbench@m-werc.org](mailto:wercbench@m-werc.org)

### Coming Soon:

- Grand Opening of 2nd Partners for Places Park, on 24th & Burleigh St.
- OES's Fall Energy Efficiency Week, Look for details soon!

### OES in the News:

[Milwaukee Turning Vacant Lots into "pocket parks"](#) - WISN ABC - July 31, 2015

[Milwaukee Shines: Solar technology growth in Milwaukee](#) - CBS 58 Sunday Morning, July 12, 2015

[Milwaukee Homeowners Focus on Solar Despite Rising Utility Fees](#) -WUWM MKE Public Radio, July 10, 2015

[The New Mr. Green](#) - Urban Milwaukee, July 1, 2015

[Will the East Side Go Solar?](#) - Urban Milwaukee - May 26, 2015

[New Solar Flower Goes Up in Milwaukee Neighborhood](#) - Wisconsin Public Radio - May 9, 2015

[Vacant lot to city park: Ezekiel Gillespie Park now model for development, transformation](#) - Fox6 - May 1, 2015

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