



WHITNEY M. YOUNG MAGNET HIGH SCHOOL



THE PROJECT: WY GREEN TEAM

Whitney Young addressed school sustainability in many ways, in and out of the school building. In-school efforts included a recycling program, making eco-friendly holiday ornaments, and conducting an energy assessment on new windows to calculate heat loss reduction and energy savings. Outside school, students volunteered at urban farms, listened to guest speakers, and planned a field trip to the Metropolitan Water Reclamation District (MWRD). During Earth Week, the project included a litter cleanup, a gardening day, and a clothing swap, engaging students with diverse interests in various environmental activities.

Project Type: Waste Reduction, Energy

Students Involved: 10

Staff Involved: 2

Location: Chicago

Grade Levels Involved: 9-12th

Number of Students Impacted: 100



We had several projects that we did both in school and out of school...so we were engaged in a variety of ways that brought in people with many interests.

- Stuart Abram



PROCESS

Students focused on creative hands-on education and action, finding many ways to engage the school community on sustainability topics. In a zoom interview with environmental artist, Chris Jordan, they learned about his work documenting consumption, litter, and nature settings. They viewed his art, including a video titled Albatross, and spoke with him about his work. With that inspiration, the team created environmental posters, and made ornaments from natural materials like baked oranges and pinecones. To focus on technical aspects of sustainability, the Green Team performed a heat loss assessment on their school's newly installed windows and studied the impacts of size and shape on heat exchange. The students planned and executed a plethora of Earth Day activities, including a trash pick-up event that produced 5 bags of collected litter.

OUTCOMES & IMPACTS

Whitney Young's project work successfully engaged students in various environmental activities, both in and out of school, fostering a deeper understanding of sustainability and ecological practices. The in-school recycling work and energy assessment provided practical lessons on waste reduction and energy conservation. The eco-friendly holiday ornaments and poster making raised awareness about reducing plastic use while encouraging students to explore creative expression. Volunteering at the urban farms and the city garden, along with guest speaker sessions, enriched students' environmental knowledge and community involvement. Earth Week activities highlighted the importance of environmental stewardship, resulting in tangible outcomes such as a cleaner school environment and a successful clothing swap, promoting reuse and waste reduction.

