

Annual Report

2020



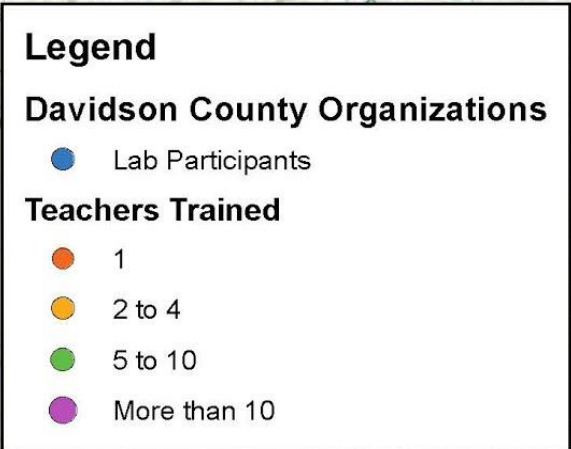
URBAN GREEN LAB™

We teach communities to live sustainably.

At Urban Green Lab, we teach communities how to live sustainably. A 501(c)3 nonprofit founded in 2009 in Nashville, Tennessee, we're working to grow a culture of learning about sustainability so we can make better choices that protect our planet and society.



Where We Work



N



Sources: Esri, HERE, Garmin, Intermap, increment P Corp., GEBCO, USGS, FAO, NPS, NRCAN, GeoBase, IGN, Kadaster NL, Ordnance Survey, Esri Japan, METI, Esri China (Hong Kong), (c) OpenStreetMap contributors, and the GIS User Community





Sustainable Classrooms

We train teachers to teach sustainability.

The Sustainable Classrooms program trains teachers how to incorporate sustainable living education into their classrooms for professional development credit. Sustainable Classrooms offers year-round STEAM-focused trainings for K-12 public and private school teachers in Middle Tennessee, with topics ranging from energy and water conservation, to food waste, solid waste and litter management, transportation and the built environment, and air quality. Materials include standards-aligned lessons, student-led home investigations, and a project utilizing 21st Century skills, social-emotional learning, and project based learning.

KEY SUCCESSES*

- Trained 217 K-12 teachers how to teach about sustainable living.
- Reached 93 schools across four school districts in Middle Tennessee.
- Hosted 15 teacher trainings since 2018, mostly for Metro Nashville Public Schools.

39%

Percentage of MNPS schools with teachers trained how to teach sustainable living

* Refers to select accomplishments since the program started.







Urban Green Lab Recognition

We turn workplaces into labs.

Urban Green Lab officially recognizes community institutions -- like schools, businesses, and nonprofits -- as Nashville-approved labs of learning. A Lab is any workplace that proves its commitment to the practice and training of sustainable behaviors, and explores new ways for making decisions that better protect people, profit, and planet. We use an assessment to diagnose needs, then work together to kickstart a workplace green team, create a strategic plan, connect organizations with fellow workplaces and experts, and help better tell their story.

KEY SUCCESSES*

- Worked with 17 public and private workplaces to become official Labs.
- Found most (93 percent) participants report increased knowledge about sustainability.
- Helped Nashville nonprofits and corporations create sustainability plans.

* Refers to select accomplishments since the program started.

93%

Percentage of Labs reporting an improvement in behavior as a result of the program



“After joining this program, I think the discussions inspired me to think of more sustainable habits I can implement in my life.”

> Student in the SIS program







Nashville Sustainability Roundtable

We exchange best practices.

The Nashville Sustainability Roundtable brings together professionals (including young professionals) from all corners of the city year-round to learn and exchange best practices around sustainability issues in the workplace. Free and open to anyone, the Roundtable's topics are based on Nashville's own sustainability story, but grounded in the U.N. Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The Roundtable includes expert panels, networking with local vendors, workshop-style interaction.

KEY SUCCESSES*

- United 614 attendees since the Roundtable began in 2018.
- Facilitated 19 themed meetings of the Roundtable, many hosted by institutions.
- Mobilized an average of 30 workplace representatives to attend each meeting.

148

Workplaces represented by attendees of the Nashville Sustainability Roundtable, nonprofit & corporate

* Refers to select accomplishments since the program started.







Nashville Food Waste Initiative

We grow food waste strategies.

Founded by the Natural Resources Defense Council (NRDC) in 2015 and in partnership with the Environmental Law Institute, the Nashville Food Waste Initiative (NFWI) drives citywide policies and strategies that reduce food waste by preventing wasted food, rescuing surplus food for those in need, and composting and recycling food scraps to build healthy soil. Through the NFWI, Urban Green Lab organizes, trains, and connects diverse food waste stakeholders year-round and offers training for how to reduce food waste in their own institution.

KEY SUCCESSES*

- Developed citywide food waste policy recommendations for Metro Government.
- Integrated food waste lessons in Metro Nashville Public Schools.
- Leading the Nashville community in collecting and analyzing food waste metrics for the city.

40

Restaurants mobilized to join the Mayor's Food Saver Challenge and adopt food waste reduction strategies

* Refers to select accomplishments since the program started.



“I have become more educated and personally benefited immensely from being part of the UGL’s sustainability roundtable, and participating in UGL’s training programs.”

> Workplace participant in the Roundtable







Nashville Environmental Justice Initiative

We teach about meaningful engagement.

The Nashville Environmental Justice Initiative (NEJI) trains organizations on how to make more equitable decisions that protect the well-being of Nashville's most-marginalized communities. A partnership between Urban Green Lab, Tennessee State University, and others, the NEJI is designed to grow a culture of systemic environmental justice learning in the city by exploring how people learn about the issue and offering personalized workshops for your school, business, or nonprofit so Nashville grows responsibly for its people, profit, and planet.

KEY SUCCESSES*

- Launched a citywide assessment to learn the need for environmental justice education.
- Interviewed some 39 key informants about the need for environmental justice learning.
- Wove environmental justice education into school and workplace sustainability training.

* Refers to select accomplishments since the program started.

18

Organizations in the Southeast who have participated in listening sessions to help inform and shape the NEJI







Students in Sustainability

We promote sustainable careers.

Students in Sustainability matches Nashville high school juniors and seniors with local business, nonprofit, and civic green teams to learn how workplaces strive to become more sustainable. Each academic year, small cohorts of students work alongside green team professionals (now virtually due to COVID-19) to help them research and solve actual sustainability challenges, then formally present their proposed solutions at semester's end. It's a great way to learn, network, build mentorships and professional skills, and discover how any job can be a green job.

KEY SUCCESSES*

- Mobilized seven Nashville companies to host cohorts of high school student interns.
- Collaborated with three Metro Nashville Public Schools to organize and prep interns.
- Guide interns in presenting solutions to real life challenges of their host workplaces.

27

Student interns joining organization green teams as part of Students in Sustainability

* Refers to select accomplishments since the program started.







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