

Solorio Academy High School

2023 Project Report



The Project:

Students at Solorio Academy High School developed a plan for improving the campus green space and involving the community in bringing the existing plant beds, pollinator garden, campus trees and future greenhouse back to life. The ultimate goal is to create a space where students, staff and families can learn and socialize outside and increase the shade on campus in the distant future.

Project Focus: Habitat Restoration, Native Plant Garden, Outdoor Learning Space, Waste Reduction
Staff Involved: 25

Location: Chicago, IL

Students: 25

Mentor: Jan Clarence Concepcion, HUSArchitecture

The Process:

First, problems were identified. The reading garden's planters were not cared for, the campus lacked trees to provide shade, and community involvement in green spaces was minimal. Students then brainstormed a variety of solutions and surveyed the garden to identify what needed to be done. They also consulted CPS Master Gardener, Iliana Epstein and Solorio's Principal about the garden plan. Work days were set up as well as native tree plantings with help from the Morton Arboretum.

The Outcomes:

The garden will be an ongoing project. Once the greenhouse is built and the plots have been reestablished - the garden will be a project the the Zero Waste Ambassadors maintain and share with the community for years to come.

In the next few months, Solorio will work on getting the greenhouse installed and built properly so that it can be secure and functional for many years to come.

Zero Waste will also continue to do bakefest events in the future! This has become a regular tradition that we they will carry out throughout the spring. If the food garden is successful, they would like to expand bakefest to COOKFEST and teach students how to cook vegan meals using vegetables from the garden.

