

GREEN COLLAR CORPS & YOUTH WATERSHED STEWARDS

SHAPING SOLUTIONS: LEARNING THROUGH ACTIVE STEWARDSHIP

Jennifer, Workforce Development Manager Stephanie Romano, Education Manager

THE WATERSHED PROJECT



The Watershed Project's mission is to inspire San Francisco Bay Area Residents communities to understand, appreciate, and protect our local watersheds.

We envision a culture where suppport for watersheds and urban nature is deeply rooted, and where individuals feel a personal and shared responsibility for watershed health.



What does a future with a deep rooted sense of responsibility for urban nature and our watersheds look like?

A future where watershed stewardship is part of a regenerative economy in which the environmental sector of the workforce flourishes.

Green jobs are plentiful, well-compensated, and desirable.





Our Approach

- Creating opportunities for connection & exploration
- Creating learning opportunities where they have not traditionally existed
- Provide solution oriented programming to address, empower, build hope, and employ youth





TWP'S GREEN COLLAR CORPS

9-month internship paid above minimum wage, 12-16 hours/week

Bonus for completing over 400 hours

Youth ages 17-24, with priority for underserved communities in Richmond

Combines:

- Hands-on environmental work
- Career exploration & mentorship
- Professional development & final projects
- Community Building





SPECIAL INTEREST PATHWAY MODEL



Greening Urban Watersheds

creek restoration, green infrastructure, pollintator gardens, irrigation



Community Outreach

environmental justice, event planning, public communication



Environmental Education

environmental science teaching, field trip facilitation, youth engagement



Water Quality Monitoring

water quality science, data collection, public education



BENEFITS OF A SPECIAL INTEREST PATHWAY MODEL

Through these pathways we can:

- Integrate interns into every aspect of our work
- Provide meaningful career exploration opportunity
- Provide specialized training
- Maintain Engagement
- Provide a sense of belonging and responsibility within the organization
- Track progress towards personal and professional development goals
- Build strong relationships
- Offer a robust experience





TWP's Workforce Development Model

GCC Interns



Focus:

- Greening Urban Watersheds
- Cleaning Urban Watersheds
- Climate Ready Communities
- Environmental Education
- Water Quality Monitoring

Apprentices



Focus:

- Greening Urban Watersheds
- Cleaning Urban Watersheds

Field Crew



Focus:

- Greening Urban Watersheds
- Cleaning Urban Watersheds



MOVING THE GREEN COLLAR CORPS FORWARD

OUTREACH & REMOVING BARRIERS

- New outreach strategies
- Flexible schedules
- Tailored Programming
- Connective supportive services
 - Transportation
 - Food
 - Coaching
 - Mentorship





INTERN TESTIMONIALS

"Each pathway of the Green Collar Corps internship has its own pathways into so many different careers, each one with its own excitement. I am honestly considering going into entomology because of how exciting the BMI was"

"What I enjoyed most was getting to do different pathways at the same time. All the work I did was different, but it felt nice to do something real that felt like, 'woah, I'm doing something with my life".

Another one of my favorite projects was restoration. This included planting native trees along Rheem creek to help bring those ecosystems back to life. We didn't just plant them, we also installed irrigation systems so that the trees could grow on their own without needing to be watered all the time. That work felt really purposeful. I could actually see how what we were doing would help that environment in the long run and, years from now, once it's fully restored, I can say I had a hand in that".



THE WATERSHED PROJECT'S YOUTH WATERSHED STEWARDS



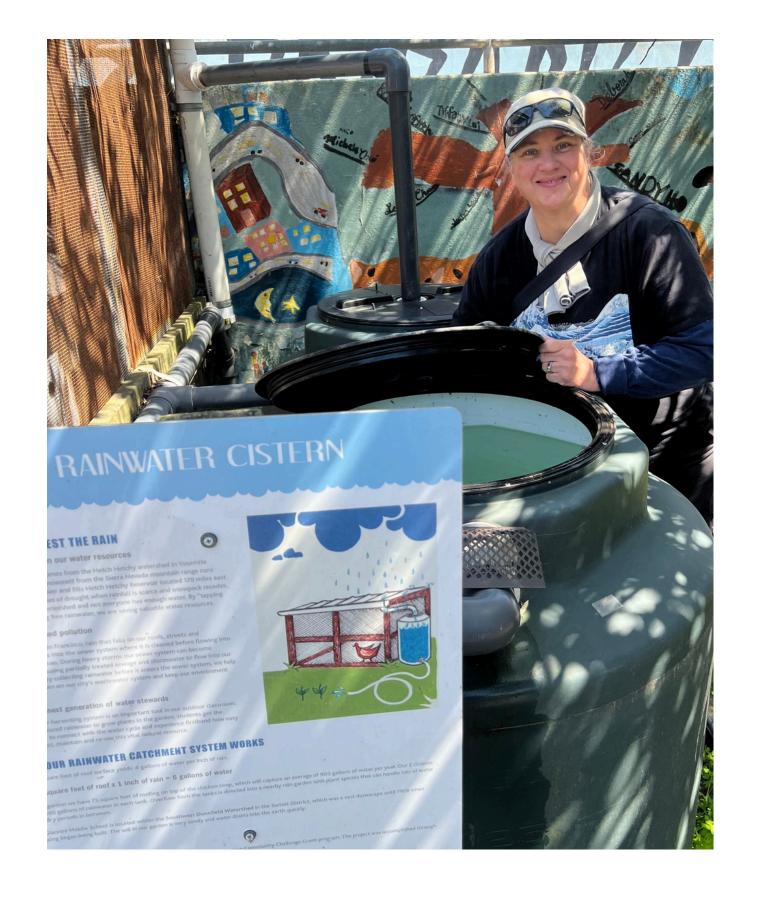
Training the next generation of green infrastructure leaders



BEGINNINGS OF YOUTH WATERSHED STEWARDS

- Collaboration between between The Watershed
 Project, SFUSD, SFPUC, and Lotus Water Engineers
- Youth Watershed Stewards curriculum focuses on ways that GSI slows, spreads, and sinks rainwater runoff before it enters the Estuary
- High school students reactivate and maintain nature-based green infrastructure (GSI) on SFUSD campus
- Students build skills in design, construction, and maintenance of GSI

 \circ





YOUTH WATERSHED STEWARDS PROTECTS THE ESTUARY AND CONNECTS STUDENTS TO NATURE-BASED SOLUTIONS

- Rebuilds and revitalizes rainwater harvesting systems and rain gardens on SFUSD campuses
- Prevents flooding during rain events in San Francisco's combined sewer system
- Students develop skills and awareness for environmental stewardship
- Provides hands-on learning opportunities in real world projects
- Removes barriers by providing other entry points to conservation careers





ADDRESSING DISTRICT NEEDS WHILE PROVIDING EDUCATION OPPORTUNITIES

- YWS provides needed maintenance work on rainwater harvesting systems and rain gardens while providing background information to students
- Client Schools: Repair projects are jointly idenfied with the district on priority list
- Positive impact on teachers and students through stewardship and mentorship
- Align green infrastructure maintence tasks with construction pathway in SFUSD





YOUTH ENGAGEMENT



Fall

Partner with John O'Connell
Technical High School and Galileo
Academy of Science and
Technology to deliver watershed
conservation education





Rebuild and revitalize rainwater harvesting systems on client school campuses

Visit green infrastructure sites around San Francisco



Spring

Rainwater Action Day at client school campuses



TRAINING THE GREEN WORKFORCE

- Introduce students to careers based in nature-based solutions: Green stormwater infrastructure
- Hand-on training: repairing rainwater harvesting systems and revitalization of rain gardens on SFUSD "client" school campuses
- Encourage a solutionist mindset for young people entering the workforce to tackle climate change challenges





ALTERNATIVE PATHWAYS TO CLIMATE CAREERS

- The Watershed Project partners with Career Technical Education students in construction pathways as well as AP Environmental Science students
- Connect students to professionals who talk about their path into GSI industry
- Prepare students for green careers beyond traditional 4-year degree pathways
- Exposure to green careers in construction, landscaping, and urban sustainability

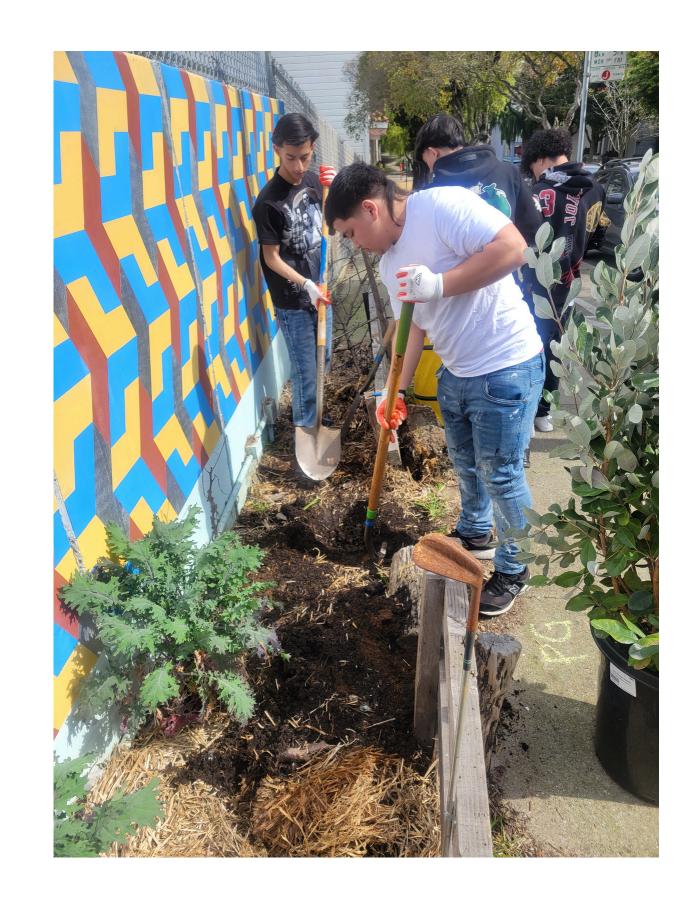




PROGRAM ACHIEVEMENTS

- 200+ students exposed to green infrastructure careers
- 200+ students trained in green stormwater infrastructure repair and maintenence
- 11 SFUSD client campuses served in cistern repair and rain garden revitlization
- CASQA 2025 award recognition for innovative approach to educating high school students about stormwater management and design







INVITING WATER (AND PEOPLE!) IN



STEPHANIE@THEWATERSHEDPROJECT.ORG
JENNIFER@THEWATERSHEDPROJECT.ORG

