



Green St. Louis Machine GAZETTE

Sustainability
theme of the month:
Cycles

January 2025 Edition

Breaking the Cycle Building a Greener, Sustainable Future!

As we welcome a new year, it's the perfect moment to reflect on the cycles that shape our lives. Our habits—big and small—create larger patterns that can either sustain or strain the world around us. This month, the St. Louis Green Machine Gazette is all about cycles—natural ones, human ones, and the ones we have the power to reshape.

A new year is a great opportunity to **break free from routines that no longer serve us and form new habits that spark self-perpetuating cycles of sustainability!** Try swapping processed foods for locally grown greens from our own tower garden, container garden or backyard! Replace short car rides with group walks or friendly carpools to build both health and community. Small changes ripple outward, forming new, greener habits that sustain us and the planet we call home.

Let's step into 2025 with resolutions that turn into revolutions, one small, sustainable habit at a time. Here are a few ideas to check out:

- <https://www.greenamerica.org/green-living/10-habits-highly-sustainable-people>

SUSTAINABILITY SPOTLIGHT

Cycles

Ferguson Middle School (FMS)



Sustainability student **Will Sanchez** (in red) is the **Green Student of the Month!** He would like to grow up to do a profession that helps the world in some way!
(Also pictured: students tasting the greens they grew!)



Ryan Young and Ferguson Middle School principal, CeAndre Perry



Sustainability student plants sprouts in the Tower Garden.

Green St. Louis Machine welcomes Ferguson Middle School as a partner school! Beginning with school year 2023-24, FMS educator **Ryan Young** began teaching the school's first ever course in SUSTAINABILITY for 7th and 8th grade! **CeAndre Perry**, the school's principal had proposed the sustainability course because it would bring hands-on learning to his students while supporting student interests, social and emotional learning (SEL), and career exploration with authentic learning opportunities. The course predicted outcomes were that students would gain:

- A deeper understanding of gardening and science connections such as human environment impact, plant structure, soil chemistry, and composting and decomposers.
- An understanding of food justice, urban green spaces, and how sustainability supports the local community
- Hands-on experiences in the STEM field and increasing knowledge of available careers.

A goal also involved creating more windows and mirrors through local community partnerships.

Educator Ryan Young, on the Cycles and SOE theme with Green St. Louis Machine
The Sustainability & Outdoor Education class at Ferguson Middle school teaches *cycles* as an ongoing theme. We discuss and research how the earth is governed by cycles and how cycles govern life on earth, including the economic cycles. For example, in SOE class just yesterday I was introducing our Grow Tower to this semester's new SOE students. We had just finished introducing one of our class mantras about conserving energy. One astute student challenged the fact that we were using fossil fuel energy to grow our plants indoors since the plant tower uses two electric supplements—the lighting system and the hydro-pumping system.

“Outside,” my student suggested, the sun’s rays are able to perform the same trick as the indoor grow lights and, “It’s natural energy,” my student suggested. Naturally, I had to discuss that winters in Missouri are not ideal for growing much, if anything at all. This was a welcomed chance also to discuss how the knowledge and know-how of being an indoor grower could interrupt the fossil fuel machine. Even though we were to use dirty energy to grow indoors we could continue the cycle of sharing what we learned and make offsets via that process.

The emotional experience of sustaining life on the tower; the benefits of eating more greens; the self-satisfaction of living in independence; the less driving to the grocery; are ways to justify our growing operation. Our economy is sorely in need of an educated public if we are to override the negative effects of pollution on our earth. It is only by educating our youth that we can break the negative cycle of dependency on Big Energy.

Pictured below: Sherry Amen, Ryan Young and school librarian, Holly James, who got the grant for outdoor gardens, chickens and more! **Green Staff of the Month Ryan Young** is an outdoor advocate whose latest hobby is gardening! He is very fond of activities that include hiking with his dog, exploring history, playing golf and following college sports. He and his wife teach their daughter the value of being sustainable in our everyday life.



Green St. Louis Machine Leaders Presented at the statewide MOSAC conference!

Last november, Mary Bueckendorf, Academic Coordinator and at Gene Slays' Girls & Boys Club and Emi Belciak, High School Science Teacher and passionate community leader and school garden advocate at Kairos Academies, were presenters at the statewide MOSAC (Missouri School-Age Conference - the largest conference in **Missouri** designed specifically for **afterschool** professionals). Their presentation was about Green St. Louis Machine, which has become one of the most popular programs at each of their

organizations!

Here is a link to view their presentation:

<https://docs.google.com/presentation/d/1C6XWa-sooH3xoSDjsIOJF5h5GV21uqVA-B6UyGWNg14/edit?usp=sharing>

After the presentation, Mary led the most popular session of the entire conference - making bath bombs with herbs grown by Gene Slays' Green St. Louis Machine Garden Club, showing how students can engage in entrepreneurship with what they grow!



**In case you missed it, we were featured
on Giving Tuesday on Channel 4!!**

*See the video clip of Green St. Louis Machine's North Side
Community Elementary School Kids by clicking the link
below!*



Watch Us on Channel 4!

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pxw2XHRNxAM>



We need to raise \$25,000 in 2025!!

We still have a LOT of need!
We are hoping to raise
\$25,000 in 2025!

Thanks for giving to us!
https://linktr.ee/greenstl_machine

Or visit our website at:
<https://greenstlmachine.org>

Why do we do The Green St. Louis Machine?



Food apartheid generates high rates of food insecurity, childhood obesity, diabetes, and heart disease in St. Louis. Thousands of children in St. Louis live in areas where there are no grocery stores nearby, and so their parents often "grocery shop" at gas stations. Eating processed food has become their lifestyle.

Many of these children have never eaten (nor know the names) of fruits & vegetables. The lack of good nutrition impacts their school performance and mental attitude as well as leads to diabetes and heart disease later in life.

YOU can make a difference in their lives today which leads to healthy adult lives later in life. We show students how to grow, harvest, prepare and eat healthy foods, thereby empowering our communities to have power and ownership over their own food! Please join us in our mission by making a donation or volunteering!



Video Clip!

You can learn more about our mission by clicking here to watch our video:

[Green St. Louis Machine Promo Video](#)

and feel free to pass this video on to your friends and family. Thank you for your support!

Download our Mission Statement Flyer!

[Click here to download](#)



Save the Date for the 2025 GREEN GALA!

Date: April 3, 2025

Time: 4:30 - 6:30 PM

Location: Mathews-Dickey Club, part of Boys & Girls Clubs of Greater St. Louis.

This year, our keynote speaker will be globally renowned science educator, Stephen Ritz, founder of The Green Bronx Machine and our inspirer! So come, get involved, donate, or support.....!

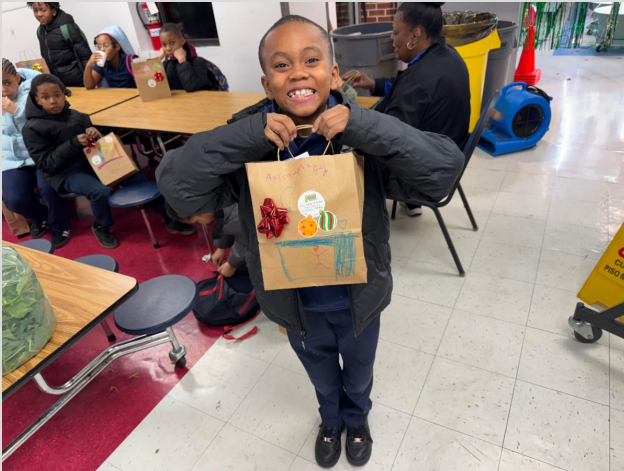
See one of our past [Green Gala Videos](#)

You can support The Green St. Louis Machine in schools here!

[Donate to The Green STL Machine!](#)



Pre-holiday break harvesting and planting and Kwanzaa at Missouri Botanical Garden



The very week before holiday break this was going on at North Side Community School's Farm-to-Table Club! Watch this reel and see the Farm to Table Club harvesting their collard greens to take home to families for the holidays and planting newly sprouted greens that will grow seemingly magically during the holiday break!

https://drive.google.com/file/d/1SwWUbnay9eU3ZavtF6l_p_fqgomg8q_L/view?usp=drive_link



And Grand Center Arts Academy's Green Machine group sent home arugula, lettuce, basil, dill and cilantro with students and what was not taken by students was offered to faculty! Here, Green STL Machine educator Cassandra Lentz offers some greens to Stella Erundu!



Mathews-Dickey Boys & Girls Club planted seeds that sprouted over the holidays and put seedlings into the Tower Garden so they could grow by themselves over the holidays!



What a surprise - how they grew over the holiday break and snowy weather!



And for Kwanzaa celebration at Missouri Botanical Garden, Green St. Louis Machine was featured serving delicious African mustards. The greens were harvested at the greenhouse and cooked by Stella Erundu, Emi Belciak and Sinclair Bowman! Everyone was so busy cooking and serving and networking with the public at the event, no one captured photos! :(Here, at least is one, of Emi and Sinclair pre-washing the greens in the greenhouse sink prior to taking them to Stella's kitchen for preparation!

Greenhouse Update -We invite you to volunteer a few hours a week or even one time to check out our Tower Farm!



Meet our new Green St.

Louis Machine staff member, Emmanuel Jones!

Emmanuel is a recent Agriculture Engineering Technologies graduate of Ranken Technical College.

In December he met Stephen Ritz of the Green Bronx Machine when Stephen visited Ranken and a connection with Green St. Louis Machine was made!

We hope to introduce Emmanuel to all of our partners! He will be an instrumental to the community, including being part of urban agriculture greenhouse operations as well as providing growing support for GSM schools and helping put on the Green Gala!



Here, Emmanuel works harvesting Tuscan Kale with Robin Wright and cleaning a fully-harvested tower of arugula in the greenhouse.



Here, Emmanuel engages in a discussion with Mathews-Dickey students about how the seeds sprouted over the holidays.



AMERICORPS VISTA! TWO POSITIONS ARE STILL OPEN!!

We want to let you know ASAP that Green St. Louis Machine has 2 AmeriCorps VISTA positions STILL OPEN! Could you suggest contacts/people we could forward this to such as colleagues in the organizations, schools and universities you work with?

M:STL- Green STL Machine Farmer in Chief
(<https://my.americorps.gov/mp/listing/viewListing.do?fromSearch=true&id=125115>)

M:STL- Green STL Machine Outreach, Capacity & Market
(<https://my.americorps.gov/mp/listing/viewListing.do?fromSearch=true&id=125116>)

These positions could be good for high school graduates or college students taking a gap year to explore career path opportunities or to gain resume-building experiences and knowledge to prepare them for applying for good jobs.....or even early retirees or people in-between jobs or careers! Full health coverage and child care is certainly appealing, as is a monthly stipend of over \$1,800!

So please help us with these great opportunities and call/text with any questions

Sherry Amen 314-757-6607, Sherry@GreenSTLMachine.org

Stella Erondy 314-590-3247, Stella@GreenSTLMachine.org



Green St. Louis Machine is dedicated to fostering sustainable empowerment around healthy food in underserved communities in St. Louis. We achieve this through our youth-centered initiative, which focuses on food justice, STEAM education, and urban agriculture. Our primary approach involves providing and supporting year-round, cutting-edge aeroponic gardening programs, within schools and youth organizations, with the goal of promoting sustainable empowerment around healthy food.



During the 2023-24 school year, we were able to serve over 450 teachers, students, and young people across nine inner city schools, two *Boys and Girls Clubs* and *R.I.S.E. Youth Center* in Spanish Lake, St. Louis County. It is worth noting that all these locations are situated within food deserts - food apartheid areas lacking consistent access to fresh and nutritious food options. Thank you for joining us in our mission!



***Thank YOU for
partnering with us!***

Wish to donate? Click here:
[Donate to The Green St. Louis Machine!](#)

Here's what your donation can do if you click on DONATE ANY AMOUNT ABOVE:



Donate T-SHIRTS for all 500 GSM students
\$5,000 (Can have your company logo too!)

\$200 or more: Attend the Green Gala to be part of it as a VIP and meet Stephen Ritz himself who will be our keynote speaker!!

Donate 500 APRONS for all Green St Louis Machine students – \$6,500 (Can have your company logo too!)

Donate award certificates for all 500 students in the GSM



Support the GSM portion of salary for a GSM Americorps Vista (Like the Peace Corps only working on American soil) for a year \$5,000

Support a GSM summer camp including field trips to GSM's Urban Agricultural Learning Center Greenhouse for 8 summer weeks of 2025
\$7,000



Have questions?

Sherry Amen at 314-757-6607

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Email: Stella@GreenSTLMachine.org

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