Volunteering at Mason

Building community connections through the Innovation Food Forest

foodforest.gmu.edu
Inspiration and Initial Installation

- Permaculture or permanent agriculture has been gaining traction at Mason for the past few years.
- Mason offered its first Permaculture Design Course (PDC) during Spring Break 2012 (3rd annual class finished in March).
- The inspiration for this garden came out of this PDC course (and initially funded by the Patriot Green Fund)
- Mason would love to see more Permaculture Gardens and Food Forests installed all over campus but the IFF must become a success first!
Goals

Earth Care:
• Preserve resources
• Retain & filter storm water
• Improve habitat
• Restore ecosystems
• Reduce waste

Rainwater is slowed by berms and plantings
The leaf bin is for composting weeds and leaves into valuable nutrients for the garden.

Composted horse manure is broken down by fungi.

Russian Comfrey accumulates nutrients unavailable to other plants and breaks up clay soil, Red Clover fixes nitrogen from the air to the soil and provides cover for wildlife.
People Care:

• Build relationships (creating resilience)
• Improves learning (cognitive)
• Fosters recreation
• Provides restorative aesthetic and spiritual experiences (wellness)
Engaging students
(Research Methods, Fall 2013)
Fair Share:

- Produce a yield of fruit, vegetables, and herbs (plus plant divisions!)

[Images of Persimmon, Native Onion, Asparagus in different stages of growth]
Blueberry flowers – soon to be fruit
Volunteer Opportunities

• Staff may use School Assistance & Volunteer Leave (up to 8 hours per year)
  • Wildlife mapping
  • Monitoring and species surveys
  • Invasive species removal (ex. English ivy)
  • Watering
  • Weeding
  • Coordinating volunteers
  • Educational outreach
  • and much more...
• Complete an HR tracking form for CSL used
Drawing skills needed!

(Help us develop a garden map)
Email: Elizabeth Torrens, Project Coordinator (it’s all volunteer time for me too!), etorren2@gmu.edu if you have questions.
Website: foodforest.gmu.edu (online reporting of volunteer hours and volunteer information form)
Photos: flickr.com/groups/foodforest
Sign up for email updates on the Google Group and like our Facebook page (both linked on the website).
Official project email address: iff@gmu.edu
Native plant installation in April 2014 around spiral mulch path
The Big Event service day
Path intersection, post repair
Mayapple (don’t eat) & Pawpaw (eat)