



Seven Generations Ahead
Building Healthy & Sustainable Communities

Fox Valley Sustainability Network hits the ground running with 2019 forums

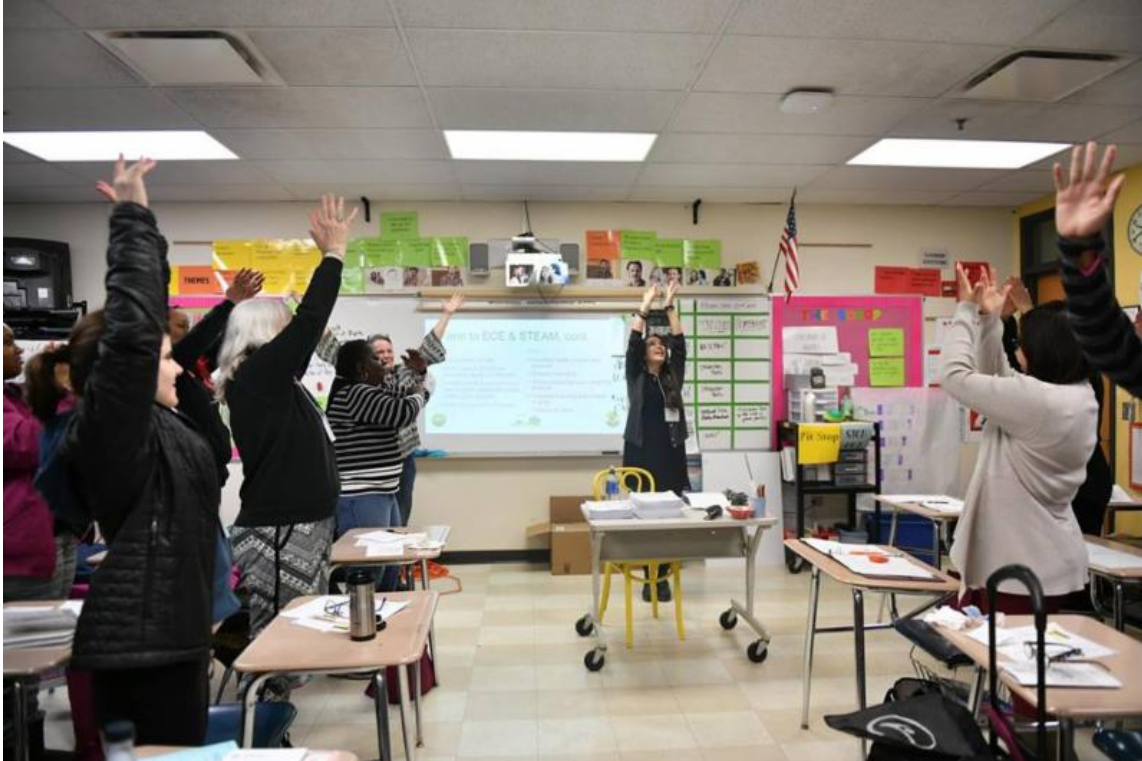


After its final 2018 event in November focusing on the Greenest Region Compact, the Fox Valley Sustainability Network is building momentum with more events planned for 2019. The first forum in early February focused on solar energy and the Future Energy Jobs Act and engaged participants across every sector, including developers, municipalities, energy providers, and concerned residents.

Over 130 attendees gathered at the Centre of Elgin on the morning of Feb. 8 to discuss solar in Illinois and the Fox Valley, sparking conversations and new connections.

[Read more and access resources](#)

IFSN shares farm to school with early childcare educators at annual symposium



Under SGA's local food project, the Illinois Farm to School Network (IFSN), staff participated in the annual symposium produced by Collaboration for Early Childhood on Feb. 23. On this rainy Saturday, hundreds of early care providers filled Percy Julian Middle School in Oak Park.

The annual gathering brings together anyone who works with young children – educators, caregiver, and parents – to share knowledge, perspective, practical skills and tools for supporting young children. This year's symposium focused on problem solving through STEAM related activities.

SGA's IFSN staff led two workshops on incorporating local food and nutrition into ECE programs, filling every desk in the seventh grade classroom.

[Read more](#)

Zero Waste Schools expands to Lake County



SGA is excited to announce that our work to support zero waste schools is currently expanding into Lake County. In partnership with the Solid Waste Agency of Lake County (SWALCO), SGA will be implementing the Zero Waste Schools North Shore Program in 3-5 Lake County schools, kindergarten through 12th grade. With this program, each school will launch commercial composting, recycling, and other waste reduction efforts in their lunchrooms and kitchens. SGA/SWALCO will conduct waste audits, provide onsite logistical guidance, and teach all students and staff the How and Why of going for zero waste. Schools are expected to divert roughly 85% of their lunchroom landfill waste while normalizing composting, recycling, and resource conservation for a new generation of student environmental leaders. This program is generously funded by North Shore Gas and SWALCO.

SGA Executive Director Gary Cuneen receives Park District's Community Service Award

In addition to helping communities across the state of Illinois become healthier and more sustainable through the work of SGA, **Gary Cuneen** makes sure to help out his home community of Oak Park.

In the last year, Gary helped the Park District secure a \$100,000 grant from Green Mountain Energy for the addition of solar panels, water harvesting, bee hives and tea composting at the Oak Park Conservatory.

He also helped the District secure tens of thousands of dollars in energy savings and reduced/free products from ComEd. For this, Gary received the Park District of Oak Park's Community Service Award.



SGA receives CCT grant to reduce wasted food

SGA is pleased to announce that it has received continued funding provided by *Food:Land:Opportunity*, a collaboration between Kinship Foundation and The Chicago Community Trust and funded through the Searle Funds at The Chicago Community Trust.



Food:Land:Opportunity

Localizing the Chicago Foodshed

This funding supports SGA's work related to food waste reduction and food scrap composting. The project's long-term goal is to expand local, sustainable Illinois food production through the development of a viable food scrap composting industry. Stay tuned for updates on this project.

Upcoming Events



Big Idea Pitch Party March 13, 5:30 p.m.

Support our pitch in the Big Idea contest! SGA's idea, *It's Our Future*, is a program that will educate, engage and empower the next generation of sustainability leaders. The Big Idea Pitch Party is powered by **Entrepreneur Leaders in Philanthropy** and the Oak Park-River Forest Community Foundation.

Register [here](#).



Green Infrastructure Forum March 20, 10 a.m.

Join us and the Fox Valley Sustainability Network for our March forum focusing on green infrastructure. Whether you're a municipal leader, from a community institution, a designer, or a concerned resident interested in how green infrastructure can improve your area, this forum will provide valuable information.

Register [here](#).

Farm to School

Catch the Illinois Farm to School Network at these upcoming events:



Environmental Education Association of Illinois Conference, March 21-23

Info [here](#).

Northern Illinois Farm to School Boot Camp, May 17, 8:30 a.m.

Info and register [here](#).



Don't miss out! Find all upcoming events from SGA and other sustainability events on our [calendar](#).

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