



Illinois Harvest of the Month program reaps a love of veggies among students

The inaugural Illinois Harvest of the Month (HOTM) program year launched in August 2017, after a successful pilot during the previous school year. More than 840 feeding or garden sites with over 467,500 students combined participate in the program each month.

Sites that are eligible to participate in HOTM include individual school sites, entire school districts, after school programs, early childcare sites, garden programs, residential programs, and juvenile justice centers. Twenty-two participants registered and nine organizations partnered to procure upward of 638,131 pounds of locally and regionally grown food.

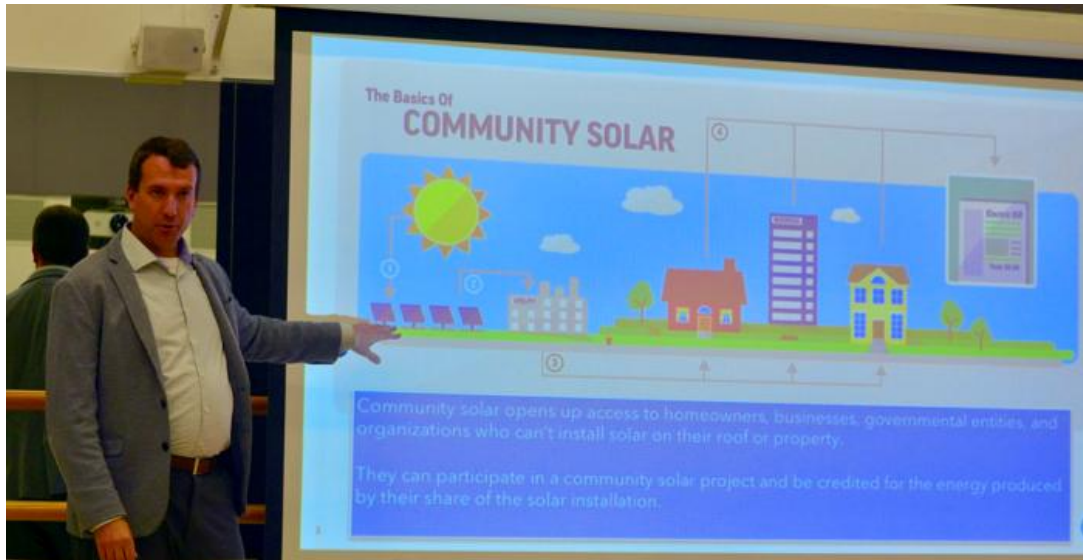


SGA's IL Farm to School staff worked with each participating site, assisting with local food procurement and cafeteria and classroom celebrations. SGA also helped with adding local foods to existing menus and creating new menus with scratch recipes.

[Read more](#)

Register for **Illinois Harvest of the Month**.

Register for the **Great Apple Crunch Day** on Oct. 11.



Jon Carson of Trajectory Energy Partners

Community gets a look at solar options

At a Sept. 7 Lunch and Learn, solar experts and developers gave overviews of the Illinois solar market.

Jon Carson (pictured above), founder and managing partner at Trajectory Energy, described how the company works with local organizations to bring solar to their communities and further engage with environmental sustainability. Trajectory is currently building a 1 megawatt solar project in Grayslake that is expected to go live next year.

Illinois "is the No. 1 state in the Upper Midwest leading in solar," Carson said. Trajectory is working with SGA and solar consultant Mark Burger to help Oak Park and River Forest residents understand solar options available to them.

The Lunch and Learn met at the Park District of Oak Park's Ridgeland Common Recreational Center, which features a 100 kilowatt solar installation.

The **Illinois Solar Tour**, a series of free public open houses throughout the state, takes place Saturday, Sept. 22, 2018. Oak Park alone has eight sites. See them listed under "Northern Sites" on the Illinois Solar Energy Association [website](#), where you can learn more and register for the tour.

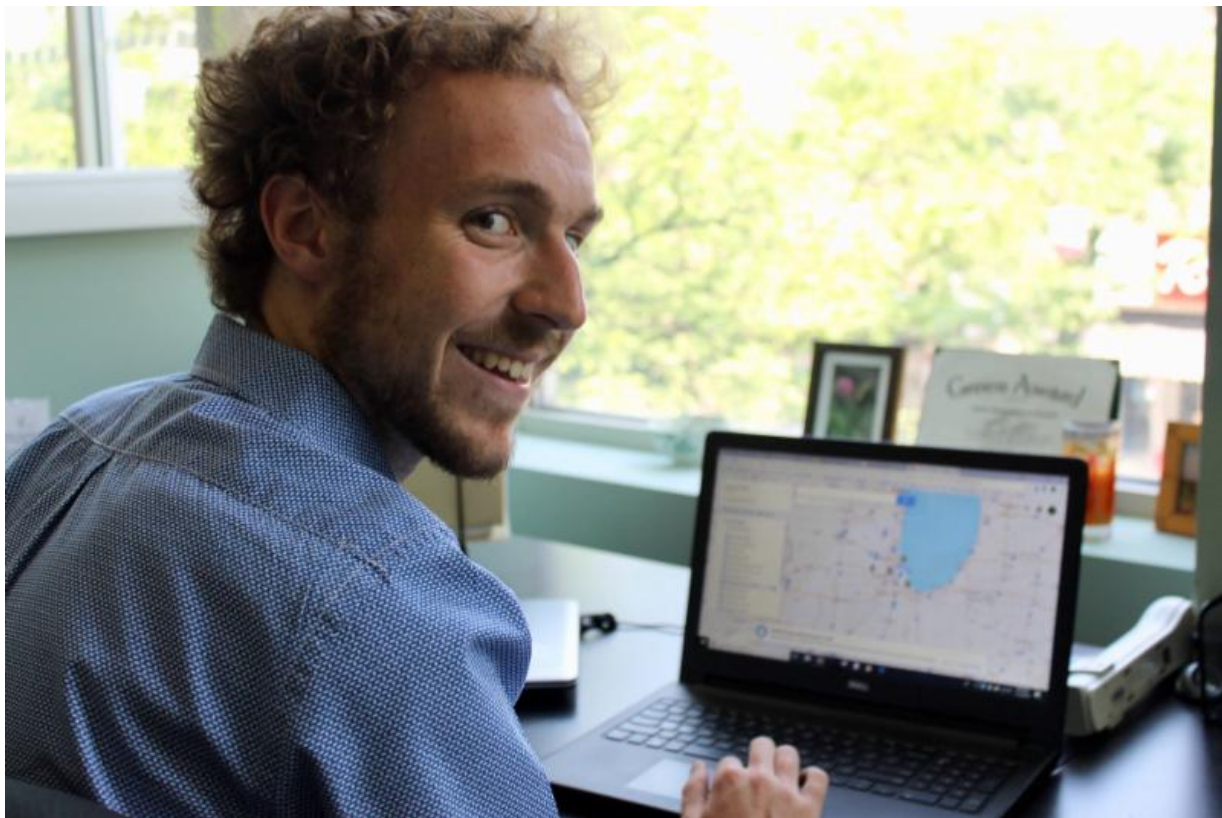
SGA staff present best practices at Midwest Food Recovery Summit



SGA staffers, **Jen Nelson** and **Susan Casey**, shared case studies and best practices at the Midwest Food Recovery Summit held at the University of Northern Iowa earlier this month.

Jen, zero waste program manager, participated in the panel "Combating Food Waste on College Campuses." Susan, Zero Waste Schools Program Manager, shared her insights on the "Back to School: Developing K-12 Programs" panel.

This was the second year for the summit, the only comprehensive food waste reduction and recovery conference in the Midwest.



SGA summer intern makes impact in recycling, recovery

Jake Jaskowiak heads into his senior year at North Central College with a newfound purpose. After learning about the Food Recovery Network during his summer interns

hip with Seven Generations Ahead (SGA), Jake plans to start a chapter this fall on the Naperville campus.

The network recovers food from university cafeterias and donates to food pantries so it doesn't go to waste, Jake explains. "Food waste is pretty ridiculous in this country, considering how many hungry people we have," says Jake, whose work at SGA included working on a toolkit for a group called Illinois Wasted Food Solutions.

Jake's research also helped to connect a hauler to a local market that accepts milk cartons for recycling.

In collaboration with SGA staff, Jake helped create multiple resources for the organization's website that will be used in the toolkit for years to come, including a two-page downloadable document on reducing wasted food. (Click image to download.)

A grant from the Tyson Foods supported Jake's internship.



[Read more](#)



'Albatross' documentary illuminates the tragedy of plastics in the oceans

SGA and PlantGreen co-hosted a screening of the documentary "Albatross" at the Oak Park Main Library on Tuesday night. The [90-minute film](#) transports viewers to a remote atoll in the Pacific Ocean, where albatross birds are dying. The filmmakers filmed thousands of young albatrosses, their stomachs filled with plastic.

"The experience was devastating, not only for what it meant for the suffering of the birds, but also for what it reflected back to us about the destructive power of our culture of mass consumption, and humanity's damaged relationship with the living world," the filmmakers write.

SGA executive director **Gary Cuneen** facilitated short discussion that followed the screening.

Lisa Files, an Oak Park resident who attended, said the film "struck a chord of universality" showing how even wild animals live and relate to one another much as humans do. For **David Pope**, the film conveyed the pervasiveness of plastic pollution

all over the world, not just in one area of the Pacific.

Cuneen encouraged the audience to check out the [One Earth Film Festival](#), which takes place March 1-10, 2019, for more environmental-themed films.

UPCOMING EVENTS



**Lunch and Learn:
Metropolitan Planning
Council on Water
Conservation**
Wednesday, Sept. 26, 12 -1 p.m.
Oak Park-River Forest Community
Foundation
1049 Lake Street, Oak Park

Come to learn about the current challenges facing our drinking water systems, and what we can do about them. This presentation by Danielle Gallet will also provide an overview on a new, free resource for elected officials and community leaders on best practices for ensuring safe and sustainable drinking water systems for our region now and into the future: Drinking Water 1-2-3. **RSVP to Abbey** at: abigail@sevengenerationsahead.org

**Lunch and Learn:
ComEd Energy Efficiency**
Tuesday, Oct. 2, 12-1 p.m.
Oak Park-River Forest Community
Foundation
1049 Lake Street, Oak Park

The ComEd Energy Efficiency Program provides incentives and technical assistance to help public sector organizations and business save energy and money! Join us for a presentation and Q&A with ComEd about the many energy efficiency incentives and services available for your organization. For more information on the ComEd Energy Efficiency Program, visit ComEd.com/WaysToSave. **RSVP to Abbey** at: abigail@sevengenerationsahead.org.



Oak Park Micro Brew



The 11th annual Micro Brew Review brought 3,000 attendees to downtown Oak Park on Aug. 18.

In keeping with its goal to keep waste to minimum, this year's Micro Brew had an overall compostable/recyclable rate of 98 percent for materials used and generated by attendees and vendors. All food vendors were provided with compostable service ware.

The festival included 85 local and national breweries serving up more than 200 varieties of craft beer samples.

Micro Brew is a fundraiser for SGA.

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