

Local Action Harnessed Nationally, Can Solve Sustainable Development Challenges in the United States: Creating a Scalable, Sustainability Network Model with Metric Driven Initiatives That Brings Global Issues Down To Local Action

Dixon, Daphne

Executive Director, Live Green Connecticut, United States, Daphne@LiveGreenCT.org

The strength to move the sustainability needle in urban areas lies in the untapped power of community organization in our 19,000 cities and towns across this country.

Background

In the face of ever more apparent challenges to the broader environmental, social and economic systems within which communities exist, there is growing awareness among community leaders of the interconnectedness between local and global systems

Research Question

What is the best and surest way to create sustainable behavior change in people across all sectors and silos, which would cause them to make decisions and take actions that would have a positive effect on the greater society and the environment across the board?

Hypothesis

The Live Green Connecticut Network is designed to support and enhance the interests of community leaders and key stakeholders in business, government, NGOs, schools, and houses of worship by identifying effective strategies for enhancing community resilience, vitality and sustainability that will not only address local needs and conditions in Connecticut, but will also support global issues by our ability to scale this model to the national level.

Methodology

The Live Green Connecticut Network will engage current community leaders and stakeholders and also develop new leadership in advancing current and new efforts for sustainability planning and collaboration, solution implementation, and tracking results. Live Green Connecticut, a team of leaders with expertise in community planning, collaborative change processes and web-based shared data systems will guide network members through a collaborative learning, leadership and networking process.

Process

- ◆ Identifying proven and promising practices for inter-municipal/community initiative/project implementation◆
- ◆ Track results on key indicators

- ◆ Encourage learning and collaboration across communities and sectors to align efforts and create synergy and results
- ◆ Consider role models that have applicability or transferability to other municipalities and provide opportunities for inter-municipal implementation
- ◆ Provide opportunities for leadership training, development and regional network building with existing organizations.
- ◆ Metrics and reporting drive planning and implementation.
- ◆ Networking, sharing best practices, interaction and support from subject matter experts, collaborative planning, and connections to resources will accelerate change

Summary

By facilitating an ongoing conversation, supporting a dedicated network and providing ongoing learning forums among community stakeholders, the Live Green Connecticut Network will generate the necessary mix of healthy competition, collaboration, resources, learning, technology and sense of possibility that will ultimately drive big ideas and innovation ◆ such as zero-waste schools, food rescue, multi-community native garden corridors, materials management and food scrap composting ◆ that can alter the change process from small and incremental to large-scale and transformational.

Key Factors:

- ◆ Annual Symposium
- ◆ Bi ◆ monthly forums
- ◆ Social Network that keeps members connected
- ◆ Metric driven, time bound initiatives

Future Work

Regional and national collaboration is essential to develop the core structure for a sustainable America. The Live Green Connecticut Model will take steps to create a strong foundation build upon executing local work that is derived from global issues.

Next Steps

- ◆ Live Green Symposium, February 7th, 2018, Grace Farms, New Canaan, CT
- ◆ Strengthen relationships with key non-profit organizations that retain Subject Matter Experts
- ◆ Deepen relationships with leading edge corporations who champion sustainability
- ◆ Sophisticated technology that provides the structure for an easy to use national social network and metric reporting
- ◆ Focused messaging and strong leadership
- ◆ Engage with other networks around the country
- ◆ Execute a regional symposium