

ACER NEWS

The Association for Canadian Educational Resources: Building a movement of everyday scientists who can monitor, measure, mitigate, and adapt to the impacts of climate change.



Fall/Winter 2020

ACER at Work

- August 6, 2020 Fleetwood Park planting
- October 7 & 29, 2020 Project Crossroads – Chelsea Gardens planting
- October 17 & November 6, 2019 Project Crossroads – Folkstone Park planting
- October 24, 2020 Project Crossroads – Knightsbridge Kings Cross planting
- November 9, 2020 Planting for Change – Morning Star Middle School



Project Crossroads: Bramalea

ACER received funding from the Arbor Day Foundation to plant trees and shrubs in low canopy areas of Bramalea in partnership with the Toronto and Region Conservation Authority (TRCA) and the City of Brampton. Project Crossroads aims to increase tree canopy on publicly accessible and private property in low canopy, high risk neighbourhoods. ACER worked with the TRCA Bramalea SNAP Program (Sustainable Neighbourhood Action Program) to select sites.

ACER worked with TRCA and the City of Brampton to plant at three sites: Folkstone Park, Knightsbridge Kings Cross, and Chelsea Gardens. Community volunteers helped plant, tag, map, and measure trees and shrubs at each site. Hosted by the City of Mississauga and TRCA, ACER tested our COVID-19 planting protocol in August 2020 in preparation for the fall plantings to ensure that the community volunteers would have a safe planting experience.

Continued on Page 3

Mulch, Measure, and MOR

Mulch, Measure, and MOR (Measure Our Resources): Everything you need to get started planting, measuring, and monitoring the growth of your trees. Visit <https://www.acer-acre.ca/mulch-measure-mor> to get started.



Planting for Change

On October 9, 2020 students at Morning Star Middle School planted our suite of indicator species as a part of our Planting for Change (P4C) program.

ACER was excited to work with the dedicated “Green Spark” teacher, Catherine Everett at Morning Star Middle School to plan the planting day that involved 2 classes. Due to COVID restrictions it was not possible to involve the whole school, but 2 classes spent the day planting 16 trees and 45 shrubs.

We also tagged, mapped, and measured 16 trees. Students decorated the posts put at each tree with the species name and information about the tree. Ms. Everett plans to add more plants to the area in coming years to create an outdoor learning space for students.

ACER is planning to plant at 3 new Planting for Change schools in 2021, Owenwood Public School, St. Catherine of Siena Separate School, and Settlers Green Public School. We are grateful to our funder,

TD Friends of the Environment Fund (TD FEF).

Planting for Change brings hands-on learning about climate change. Relevant outdoor curriculum can strengthen student STEM skills.

Schools interested in establishing a P4C outdoor climate change lab can contact us at: office@acer-acre.ca.

Free mulch deliveries are available to schools from the cities of Brampton and Mississauga.

ACER Interns

This year seven Sheridan College interns from the Environmental Control program worked with ACER in the fall rather than the summer due to the pandemic. The interns are Monika Patel, Inderjeet Kaur, Balvir Kaur, Kamalpreet Kaur Jaimin Jayeshbhai Patel, Jasmanjot

Singh Shergill, and Sandeep Khosa.

They did a tree inventory at the Sheridan College Davis campus. They re-measured trees that had been inventoried previously to determine which species had grown the most. This year they also calculated

the carbon sequestered by all the trees they measured and assessed the condition of the mulch around the trees.

We thank all our interns for their hard work, especially completing field work despite the pandemic.



Project Crossroads

As Project Crossroads plantings were being completed in Bramalea, presentations were being made from October to December by ACER and Catherine Sople of Building Up Our Neighbourhoods (BUON).

Sixteen (16) delegations and deputations were made to a wide variety of audiences- Public and Separate School Boards, city Environmental Action Committees, Sustainability Committee of Ontario Association School Business Officials (OASBO,) Mississauga Board of Trade and, finally, on Dec 10th to the Region of Peel.

Looking over these past months, COVID-19 has brought back the value of outdoors to peoples' mental and physical wellbeing. Residents now place greater value on their green spaces and are beginning to understand their role in restoring and protecting their natural surroundings.

The Big Red Oak

The Toronto Council preserved its oldest and largest Red Oak in response to united community efforts. Edith George was joined by author Mark Cullen and bracelet crafter Sophia to collect \$353,000 in donations. ACER sent a letter with carbon sequestration calculations, and a 1772 trails map locating the Red Oak tree. The Red Oak sequestered 31 tons of carbon. Yearly, it can capture 2.5 tons CO₂ from 1300 L auto fuel emissions.

Project Crossroads: Bramalea Continued



The first planting took place at Chelsea Gardens on October 7, 2020 when 8 community volunteers planted 6 trees.

Another 8 volunteers planted 7 trees at a second planting day on October 29, 2020.

On October 17, 2020 34 community volunteers planted 35 trees and 30 shrubs at Folkstone Park. Unfortunately, 19 of the trees were vandalized shortly thereafter. ACER worked with TRCA to organize a second planting on November 6, 2020 to replace the vandalized trees with help

from student volunteers from the school next to the park, Folkstone Public School.

On October 24, 2020 45 trees and 30 shrubs were planted Knightsbridge Kings Cross with help from 21 community volunteers who lived in the apartment buildings where the planting was done.

We are thankful to the TRCA, the City of Brampton for their work on Project Crossroads. As well as CAPREIT and Living Peel, the landowners, for providing the sites for the plantings.



ACER's COVID Wellbeing Survey

After COVID-19 hit, studies from around the world showed that effects of isolation, quarantining, and economic impacts had begun to negatively impact mental health, especially for youth and essential workers. How did being outdoors in nature, and spending time with community, help with this? This was the topic that we wanted to explore to add to the worldwide reflection about the healing and peace that being outside in times of difficulty can bring. After ACER's COVID-19 protocol took shape and plantings were scheduled in the diverse communities for Project Crossroads, we developed a survey that looked at both mental health and experiences in nature during COVID-19; we also asked questions about how people felt after planting with ACER. Everyone who came to the plantings, left with positive, joyful experiences and a greater sense of connection and community, and would recommend it to their family and friends. People felt supported, valued, and that they were able to give back to their communities. Almost everyone who came to the event recognized the connection between planting trees and the positive impact it can have on climate change and the environment, as well as their own physical and emotional health. The survey also identified good youth jobs and emergency preparedness planning as priority for a strong recovery.

Inside ACER

ACER INTERNS

Sheridan College

- Monika Patel
- Inderjeet Kaur
- Balvir Kaur
- Kamalpreet Kaur
- Jaimin Jayeshbhai Patel
- Jasmanjot Singh Shergill
- Sandeep Khosa

Canada Summer Jobs

- Ayesha Talreja

ACER STAFF

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- Catherine Soplet: Community Liaison

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