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Sustainability in My Community - 4 Hour Group Activity

Instructor Directions and Guidelines

Divide the class into groups of 3-5 students (you probably want to make sure that each group can fit in one car, and that each group has a driver who can provide transportation for this exercise.

Take a few minutes at the beginning of class (or at the end of a previous class) to describe the activity and review each task. Leave a few minutes to answer questions

Let students know how you would like them to 'turn in' this information. Maybe you could create a facebook group where groups could post their videos and answers, or maybe you simply want them to bring their results back to class and give a copy to you, or share them with the whole class.

Tasks:

Determine a team name for this activity.

1. **Interview a Green Professional**: Find a professional who works in some area of sustainability and conduct 5-10 minute interview with him or her. The interview should be taped or vide-recorded on the cell phone of one member of your group. You should ask this individual some relevant questions related to topics that you have learned about in class.
2. **Locate a LEED Certified building** in the community. Be sure to note its location, the level of certification it has earned, and the business or owner.
3. **Locate 3 retail businesses that have low-flow fixtures:** List the name and location of the business and also mention which fixtures you have identified as low-flow.
4. **Find 2 local restaurants who serve locally sources, sustainable food**: If possible, talk to an employee, manager, or owner about where the farms or providers are located and why they chose this option.
5. **City Sustainability:** Research the City of Santa Fe and write a brief paragraph about 3 initiatives or goals that the City has implemented in order to make progress in areas of sustainability (Instructor, the full set of possible responses can be found on the following website: http://www.santafenm.gov/index.aspx?NID=685)
6. **Find a Sustainable Business**: Find a local business that is incorporating sustainability into their operations. List the name and address of the business. Write a few sentences about what they are doing in terms of sustainable operations. Be sure to include the source of your information, this may be the name of an individual you spoke with, or a publication, website, etc.
7. **Interview 5 Residents (NOT members of your class!):** conduct a brief survey of 5 individuals to determine the most pressing sustainability issue for Santa Fe. Go to a public location and work as a team to ask 5 citizens their

opinions. If you do this as a group, it can be quick and easy. All you need to do is stop 5 individual in a public location. Tell them that you are in a sustainability class and you would like to know their opinion. Ask them each the following question: "What do you believe is the most important sustainability issue concerning residents of Santa Fe?" Record their answers as accurately as possible (word-for-word is ideal).

8. **Find 3 Sustainability Resources:** determine and list 3 resources in Santa Fe that are available to help businesses or individuals be more sustainable. The resources could really be anything as long as it is a service available to the community that pertains to sustainability.

Bringing it all together:

Once student teams have delivered or posted their answers, take some time to gather as a group to discuss and share what each team found.

Here are some questions that might be good to talk about as a group:

- What did you learn about sustainability efforts in this area?
- Did anything surprise you about what you found?
- Now that you have asked some members of the public their opinion, what do you think are the most important sustainability issues facing this community?
- As a class, rank the top three most important sustainability issues in order of importance.
- From speaking with some members of the public about sustainability issues, do you feel like the general population is aware of these important sustainability issues and how they can participate in the sustainability effort?

Ask students these final questions:

- What do you think are some areas of weakness in the way that sustainability is addressed in this area?
- Is there anything you can think of that could improve these areas?