



## County's E3 employment training program featured in presentation in Washington

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RACINE - Racine County's E3 (Employ, Enrich, Engage) employment training program, which engaged 240 young people in "green jobs" last summer, received broad exposure on March 6 in Washington, D.C., at the National Association of Workforce Boards Conference.

Four youths involved in E3 were featured in a presentation entitled "Developing Youth Programs to Build Social and Economic Capital."

One reason the program stood out from other stimulus programs around the country was Racine County's use of strong community partnerships to leverage the federal funds and garner additional monetary and in-kind local resources. "We did not realize how unique our E3 Program and Racine County were until we heard the great reaction from the audience," said University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee student Grace Caringello, 20, from Burlington, who worked with a team last summer to develop a recycling program for the Burlington Area School District.

Another E3 representative was Prairie School senior David Sanchez, 18, who created Job-Link Racine to employ homeless youth. He described how the community partnership that helped develop the county's program and even collaborated to create the E3 name. He also described his experience with the ARRA Scholars Program, a continuing education course held at the University of Wisconsin-Parkside where students from Racine County learned about the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) and assessed E3's economic, environmental and social impact.

The youths also went to Capitol Hill to meet with staff members from U.S. Paul Ryan's and Sen. Russ Feingold's offices. "Meeting with some important people was a great opportunity to have our voices heard," said Gateway Technical College student Olivia Fields, 21, who worked last summer at a local green business, Pacific Sands, and now works at 21st Century Preparatory School.

The E3 representatives also drew inspiration from visiting Washington-area landmarks. Steven Cotton, 21, who was part of an environmentally friendly lawn care business last summer and now works at the Racine Family YMCA, said: "It was pretty crazy to actually see the Lincoln Memorial and stand where Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. gave his 'I Have a Dream' speech. It was the place in Washington that I always wanted to see."

County Executive Willilam McReynolds and County Board Chairman Peter Hansen, who were in Washington for a National Association of Counties event, attended the NAWB presentation. Said McReynolds, "These four young people were terrific representatives of the youth of Racine County; their work deserves this national acclaim, as well as the applause of Racine County residents."

To learn more about the E3 success story and find out about future E3 opportunities, go the WDC's website at <http://www.wdc@racineco.com>