

Madison County Honors Educator and School For Their "Green" Contributions

by Submitted by Madison County Administrator's Office
May 26 2023 9:12 AM



EDWARDSVILLE — Madison County recognizes Roxana educator for her leadership and creativity in helping to keep her school “green” and honoring the institution where she teaches as “Green Team of the Year.”

Madison County's Green Schools Program named Roxana High School teacher Amie Hanneken as "Coordinator of the Year" and Roxana High School as its "Green Team of the Year."

Hanneken serves the high school's green school coordinator.

"Through her dedication and passion, she has successfully instilled a deep sense of environmental consciousness among students, staff and parents alike," Roxana High School Principal Jason Dandurand said.

Dandurand said that by forging collaborations with teachers across disciplines, Hanneken has facilitated the integration of environmental concepts into a wide range of subjects.

"Through these collaborative efforts, students are able to explore the intricate connections between science, mathematics, humanities and the environment, fostering a holistic understanding of sustainability and ecological systems," he said.

During the past school year, Hanneken successfully completed her dream of an outdoor classroom for Roxana High. She recruited staff members from various departments to help with the endeavor.

The outdoor garden classroom, which consists of various plants, a greenhouse, rain barrels, composting stations, a tool shed, picnic tables, raised plant beds, decorated stepping stones and a selfie station painted on the wall to welcome guests is created and maintained by students.

The area is used by teachers for classes throughout the school year.

Amie also encourages students to participate in the Green School Program competitions and collections that support resource management. She inspires students to be good stewards to land, air and water.

Madison County is also honoring Roxana High School staff and students as its "Green Team of the Year. The "Green Team of the Year" award recognizes students and/or staff that demonstrate a commitment to organizing, managing, and leading conservation-related activities as part of the Madison County Green Schools Program.

Hanneken nominated Roxana High School staff and students for their “green” efforts. The Green Team works to provide opportunities to students and staff at the school centered on recycling, gardening, composting and continual improvements to the outdoor classroom, which went in during the 2021-2022 school year.

Hanneken said that collaboration within the school has been key to the success of the Green School Program this past year.

“Students and staff worked together to enlarge and improve the (outdoor) space,” Hanneken said.

She said students installed two raised garden beds, a compost bin, bird houses, and picnic tables. The Shop Class loaned tools to help build the classroom and garden and will be installing gutters for rain barrels.

The Art Club painted a selfie wall on the garden tool shed and the Botany Class planted a variety of seeds and maintained the plants, Hanneken said. The Special Education Foods therapists use the garden as a safe space for students.

Community groups — Alton Audubon, Good Dirt Community Garden and Goshen Gardens — and family members helped in various ways, including providing seed donations.

“In a continued effort to create interest and participation, a group of students initiated an Instagram account for the Green Team,” Hanneken said.

Not only does the outdoor classroom serve as a lesson in collaboration and caring for the environment, it is a wonderful gathering place for a variety of events.

“It is useful as a classroom space as well as a space to host guest speakers,” Hanneken said. “These accomplishments will continue to provide learning opportunities and benefit the school for years to come.”

Building and Zoning Administrator Chris Doucleff and the Madison County Green Schools Program Coordinator Lisa would like to thank the Green Team at Roxana High School for their dedication to improving their school sustainability and for teaching future generations the importance of taking care of their environment.

To find out more about the Green Schools Program visit the county’s website at www.madisoncountylil.gov/departments/planning_and_development/green_schools_programs.php.

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Photo cut, left to right — Madison County Green Schools Program Coordinator Lisa Rogers presents Roxana High School teacher Amie Hanneken with the “Coordinator of the Year” certificate. Hanneken receives the award for her contributions and teaching students about the importance of sustainability and taking care of the environment.