Reach and Engage Diverse Audiences

Jacki Zevenbergen,
Stormwater Education Program Manager
What is our goal?

Increased participation in conservation - environmental justice

- To be more visible and relevant
- Service Projects for their community
- School projects
- To help spread the conservation message
CUYAHOGA COUNTY

- 1.2 Million residents
- ~36% non-white
- Over 90% developed
- Need better outreach to underserved audiences
Is this diversity reflected in our programs, board and staff?

• Yes, at times…
  o We get many requests to come to Cleveland events.
  o Area 2 Envirothon and Camp Canopy are not representative
    • improving
  o Conservation service projects are sometimes representative.
    • Schools and other groups
  o Need to attract non-white staff and board members
2017 Area 2 Envirothon
Who are we missing?

Several Cuyahoga cities, including Cleveland, Warrensville Heights, East Cleveland and Bedford Heights, are among the 17 cities in Ohio where non-white groups now make up a majority of the population (estimates released in December by the Census Bureau)
2017 Bedford Stream Cleanup
Why should we care about diversity?

• "In the end we will conserve only what we love; we will love only what we understand; and we will understand only what we are taught." (Baba Dioum, Senegalese forestry engineer, 1968.)

If the conservation message is not reaching a large segment of the population, they may not get engaged in conservation practices.
Challenges to creating equity in outreach programs?

- Social/cultural
- Logistical
- Economic
Economic

- School costs for transportation and substitute teachers can be prohibitive
- School lunch coordination
- Proper attire, gear
Teacher burnout
Teachers focused on test scores
Logistical

- Transportation after school for training
- Mentors
Logistical

Language barriers
Logistical

Cancellations cause problems for the SWCD
Solutions

- Community led events
- Cleveland Youth Opportunities Unlimited
- Green Infrastructure Workforce Development
- YMCA
- Community Development Corporations
- Intern and volunteer recruitment
- Collaborations - Ambassadors
Resources
- Scholarships
- Training materials - kits
- Mentoring
- Parallel event - Practice Envirothon
- Teacher workshops-Earth Partnership for School (Latino)
Other Solutions

• Reach out to local schools for volunteers and interns
• Job fairs
• Community Engagement
• Jacki Zevenbergen, Stormwater Education Program Manager
  jzevenbergen@cuyahogaswcd.org

www.cuyahogaswcd.org