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## **Purdue students and local high school to install a native savanna and edible garden at Oakland High School, April 21**

WEST LAFAYETTE, Ind. – “Ford Motor Company funds \$9,000 student-led project to install a native plant savanna and edible garden at Oakland High School April 21, 2013.”

As recipients of the \$50,000 national Ford College Community Challenge (C3) grant, an interdisciplinary team of Purdue students have partnered with local non-profit Wabash River Enhancement Corporation (WREC), Purdue Water Community, and Oakland High School to collaboratively design and install a native plant savanna and edible garden at Oakland High School on Sunday, April 21, 10 AM – 4 PM. This installation will serve as an educational demonstration site for the community.

"It makes me proud to be part of the Greater Lafayette community knowing there are Purdue students and community partners like WREC doing projects like this with our high school!"  
Jon Eifler, science teacher, Oakland High School

This event is the first phase of a multi-phase project that will “green” the grounds of Oakland High School and remediate stormwater runoff, ultimately improving the water quality of the Wabash River. The second phase of the project will include a rain garden and pervious pavement to be installed later this summer.

"This course has shown me how a small class can reach out to involve so many individuals in the community. During a time when texting at the dinner table and pulling out the laptop at home to keep working is so common, we are gathering volunteers to meet face to face and do something good for the Wabash River while educating the community in the process," stated Lauren Kennedy, Purdue Environmental and Ecological Engineering student.

“This has been an exceptional learning and leadership opportunity for Purdue students to work collaboratively with community partners and industry players to co-design urban water projects. The Oakland High School installation is the second of three planned projects—the other two occurring at Cary Home for Children and Imagination Station. We are incredibly grateful for Ford’s contribution and hope this innovate academic-community-industry partnership can be duplicated and future projects can be installed in the Greater Lafayette Area,” said Lindsey Payne, course instructor and PhD candidate in Ecological Sciences and Engineering.

In addition to funding from the Ford Motor Company, Oakland High School has also received donations from the Purdue Office of Engagement and the WREC.

WREC leads efforts in the community to improve water quality in the Wabash River through a cost-share program aimed at installing agricultural and urban water improvement projects. \$14.3 million in need has been identified and, to date, \$606,000 has been spent locally to install such projects. An additional \$315,000 in requests for urban-based improvement projects are in the queue for funding. “The Ford C3 award is well-timed as it helps us address an urgent, unmet need in the community, improving water quality in the Wabash River,” said Sara Peel, Director, Watershed Projects, WREC.

**Volunteer for the Event:**

[http://www.wabashriver.net/volunteer\\_OHS](http://www.wabashriver.net/volunteer_OHS)

**About Ford Motor Company Fund and Community Services**

Ford Motor Company Fund and Community Services works with community partners to advance driving safety, education and community life. The Ford Motor Company Fund has operated for more than 60 years with ongoing funding from Ford Motor Company. The award-winning Ford Driving Skills for Life program teaches new drivers through a variety of hands-on and interactive methods. Innovation in education is encouraged through national programs that enhance high school learning and provide college scholarships and university grants. Through the Ford Volunteer Corps, more than 25,000 Ford employees and retirees each year work on projects that better their communities in more than 20 countries. For more information, visit [www.community.ford.com](http://www.community.ford.com).

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