



August 8, 2022 – For Immediate Release

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Recognition signage from The Conservation Foundation at the rain garden on the South Suburban College Main Campus.

South Suburban College Earns Recognition from The Conservation Foundation

SOUTH HOLLAND, IL—South Suburban College (SSC) was recently recognized by The Conservation Foundation, one of the region's oldest and largest not-for-profit land and watershed conservation organizations dedicated to preserving and restoring open space, protecting rivers and watersheds, and promoting stewardship of the environment of northeastern Illinois.

The acknowledgement came due in part to the college's long-standing rain garden, bird feeder, community garden, and being home to indigenous trees planted throughout campus for the last 30 years. These plantings are already part of an annual gathering which serves to additionally maintain certification with the National Arbor Day Foundation.

"Students have helped a lot with planting of trees, campus cleanup, and trying to attract wildlife," said Environmental Science and Biology Instructor, Eric Myers, Ph.D., who applied for

the recognition earlier in the year as head of the SSC Sustainability Committee. After the application was submitted, representatives from The Conservation Foundation evaluated the campus grounds on two separate occasions before the distinction was made official. "I wanted the organization to be aware of our campus initiatives so we can get some recognition for the sustainable work that's been going on here long before I arrived," stated Myers.

Official recognition signage can be found at the college's rain garden, which is often inhabited by butterflies, dragonflies and bees flying throughout the area. "A lot of insects and birds in North America are in decline," Myers added, "and that's mostly because of a lack of habitat." Due to the team effort of the SSC community, the college is now home to many sand pipers, blue wing teals, American toads and green frogs. Myers concluded, "I hope that local residents will follow in SSC's footsteps, taking the opportunity to grow native plants, using a minimal amount of chemicals, and reusing rain water on their home properties when possible."

Details about SSC's recognition by The Conservation Foundation and the Sustainability Committee can be directed to Eric Myers, Ph.D. at (708) 596-2000, ext. 2318 or via email at emyers@ssc.edu. The community at large is welcome to visit the SSC rain garden, located on the southern side of the Physical Fitness and Athletic Center on the South Suburban College Main Campus, located at 15800 S. State St. South Holland, IL.

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