

Leanna Kelly

Final Action Plan Progress Report Form

After attending the first session of BELL this summer I formulated an action plan to help improve my community. I choose to teach my community about composting. I choose this topic because it was in a field I am interested in and I had good ideas on how I could present it. My plan was to teach my community about composting because I believed that if they had the knowledge on how to compost they would.

While at BELL I tried to think of the best way that I could educate my community about composting. I decided that I would hold several classes at a local school. My biggest problems that I thought I would encounter was getting permission to use the school and getting people to attend my class. When I got home from BELL I was talking to one of my friend's parents about BELL and my action plan. She informed me that she was in charge of the Huntington Fall Festival and she wanted me to teach composting there. This was a perfect opportunity because it solved my two most prominent problems. I would present at the festival so I wouldn't need to have access to the school and over 5000 people attend the festival so I wouldn't have a problem getting attendance.

After confirming that I would have a booth at the Huntington Fall Festival I started to ready my project. I tried to think of how I could inform people about composting. I decided that the best way I could give everyone all the information they needed would be a pamphlet. This would be useful because not only could they read the information, they would have something to refer back to if they had any questions. Also it would be there to remind them to keep composting! I had to do extensive research to make my pamphlet. I spent a long time researching and drafting what I wanted to write. I then put the pamphlet together and had my dad do a

mechanical drawing of an example composting box on the inside. I knew I had to do other things to present at my booth, however I had very limited funds. I wrote up flashy posters about composting to bring attention to my booth such as “Don’t be a statistic, COMPOST!” Along with flashy posters I made informative posters with statistics on composting and drawings of what you can and can’t compost.

In my research I had discovered worm composting. It is a type of composting that is done indoors by worms. I decided it would be a nice attraction for kids to have worms at my booth; also I wanted to start worm composting in my house. I ordered 500 worms through the mail and they showed up at my house three days later. I settled them into their new 20 gallon plastic home. My dad and I then constructed a see through plastic outdoor composting bin. We wanted it to be see through so that people would be able to see the layers of compost inside. We also thought that a see through container would be more interesting and welcoming to people who were thinking of stopping by my booth.

The day of the fair finally arrived! My mom helped me bring all my supplies with me to the fair and helped me set everything up. We brought apples with us to hand out so that people could eat them then throw the core into the compost pile. The fair started and I was nervous people would not want to come to my booth. At the beginning it was slow then more and more people kept arriving. There was a lot more interest than I thought that there would be. At times there was up to 10 people I was talking to at once. I had made 300 pamphlets the first day to hand out and I went through all of them. I was surprised by how many people didn’t know what compost was! I was also pleased to hear children around ages five to ten telling their parents, “that’s compost, I learned about that in school.” Other people were confused, they kept asking me what I was selling, I had to explain to them that I was not selling anything I was simply on a

mission to change my community. My mom, dad and aunt also helped me teach at my booth. They explained to people about composting and helped show off some of the samples that I had brought with me of things that are and are not compostable. They also helped me with transit and networking.

On the second day of the fair one lady who I spent some time explaining composting to the day before came back over with a friend to see me. She told me how she had spent the night before designing her composting area and that she needed to bring her friend back today to see my booth. I was very pleased that she had become so enthusiastic about what I was teaching. I knew then that people were actually listening to me and planned to act on what I was teaching them. I knew I was making an impact. I had also heard from other people later on in the year that they had begun composting or planned to start it in the spring. People in my community are now helping to create a more sustainable environment to live in. That evidence has motivated me to keep working on my project.

Through working at the Huntington Fall Festival I was offered the opportunity to present at several other festivals. Last month I worked at my school's Health and Wellness fair and this weekend I am working at an Earth Day fair in Farmingdale.

I attended the Leadership Institute Symposium on Social Action in November. The symposium was after the initial fair that I worked. It helped me to stay motivated on my project and it gave me great new ideas to work on. It was very helpful and a good way to get re-motivated. It was also great to meet up with my friends from the summer.

My action plan has been very successful thus far. Next year I will be attending Cornell University. At Cornell they have a composting club. I was hoping I could bring pieces of my

project with me to teach them. I was also hoping we could incorporate what I was doing into what they are doing as a club.