

Community News

Big Creek Connects welcomes Lakewood High School students: A Place in the Sun

John Benson, special to cleveland.com

Updated: Oct. 07, 2024, 1:08 p.m. | Published: Oct. 07, 2024, 8:10 a.m.



Big Creek Connects welcomes area students to Brooklyn. Courtesy of Big Creek Connects

BROOKLYN, Ohio -- When Big Creek Connects isn't hosting cleanup events, the nonprofit can be found edifying the public about local urban watersheds.

This includes inviting Northeast Ohio high school students to participate in a stream monitoring program in Brooklyn's Big Creek.



Big Creek Connects welcomes area students to Brooklyn. Courtesy of Big Creek Connects

The most recent educational opportunity took place late last month, when 62 Lakewood High School students visited the area.

“Funded annually by the GM Foundation, the stream monitoring program introduces students to watershed stewardship and the application of science, technology and engineering with professionals onsite,” said Big Creek Connects Executive Director Bob Gardin.

He noted that 18 Berea-Midpark High School students were also present.

“It combines monitoring of the chemical, biological and physical characteristics of the east and west branches of Big Creek, a tributary of the Cuyahoga River, with site tours examining the natural and man-made environments within Cleveland Metroparks’ Big Creek Reservation.”

During the site tours, students learned about the environment beyond the stream and how infrastructure -- like buildings, roads and parking lots -- contributes to the runoff entering streams.



Big Creek Connects welcomes area students to Brooklyn. Courtesy of Big Creek Connects

The students studied the stream’s chemical parameters, such as pH, dissolved oxygen, nitrates, phosphates and turbidity.

Lakewood High School AP Environmental Science Rita Chahda-Gonzalez said the experience was powerful for her students.



Big Creek Connects welcomes area students to Brooklyn. Courtesy of Big Creek Connects

“One student said that seeing macroinvertebrates alive and counting them gave her a real understanding about the health of the creek,” she said.

“Another said about the watershed simulation that the physical representation and seeing how simulated oil, salt, pesticides and herbicides can get into our lake so fast after it rains was such a shock to the kids, and real fun.

“They came back and were making true connections to what we are currently learning in class.”

<https://www.cleveland.com/community/2024/10/big-creek-connects-welcomes-lakewood-high-school-students-a-place-in-the-sun.html>

Accessed: 10/12/24