



Using Mentors to Create Watershed Experiences for Urban Core Youth

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Executive Director

Blue River Watershed Association

S.T.R.E.A.M. Teams

Students Teaching River Education Around the Metro

Funded by:

EPA Urban Waters Small Grant

97745001

Objectives of this Presentation:

1. Inform you about S.T.R.E.A.M. Teams, its best practices and lessons learned.
2. Create awareness for how to utilize mentors in Citizen Science experiences with youth.
3. Encourage creative and innovative ways to promote awareness within communities of stormwater & water quality issues, and the impacts that people have on local waterways.

Blue River Watershed Association

Restoring & Protecting Watersheds through Environmental Education



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Watershed Association

*educating and engaging Kansas Citizens
to restore and protect the Blue River Watershed*

Teaching the
importance of
water quality
through hands-
on instruction
and service
learning
methods.

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Community Outreach



Assisting homeowners understand and reduce stormwater runoff.

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Community Partnerships

Working with businesses and corporations to build better communities and to protect our most valuable natural resource.



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And Collaboration

Assisting
schools and
communities
understand
their role
in the
environment



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educating and engaging Kansas Citizens

improving water quality in the Blue River Watershed

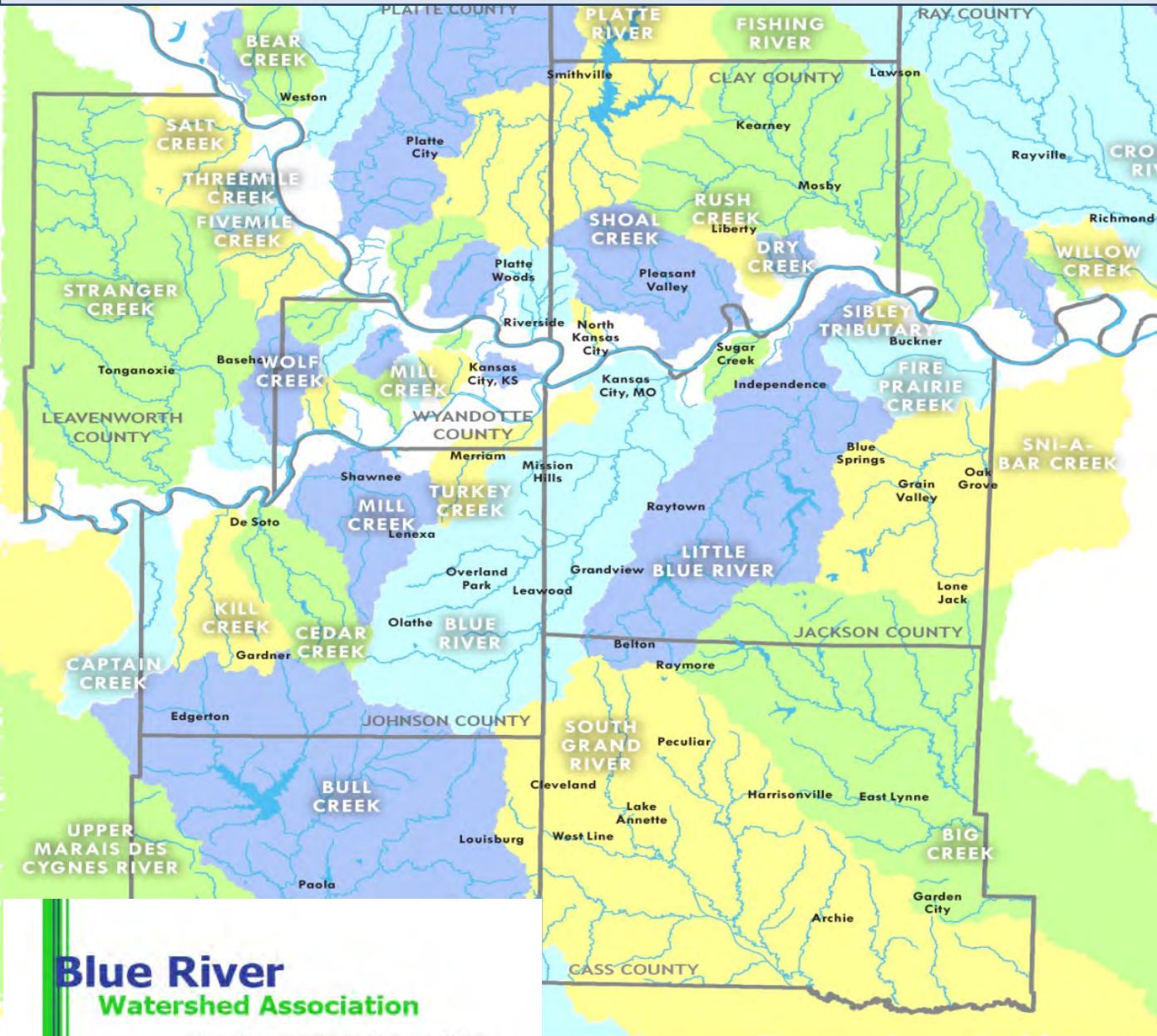
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Stewardship



Helping everyone become better environmental stewards for the protection of area watersheds.

Kansas City Area Watersheds



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- 2 States: Kansas & Missouri
- 7 Counties
- 80% of metropolitan area
- Over 1 million people
- Over a dozen major school districts

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*“The care of rivers is not a matter of rivers,
It is a matter of the human heart.”*

~ Tanaka Shozo

Objectives of STREAM Teams:

1. Engage underserved youth in hands-on, experiential activities of water quality monitoring, analysis, recording & reporting.
2. Provide levels of mentorship for students to relate, in Citizen Science experiences.
 - Corporate Mentors
 - Education Mentors
 - High School/College Interns

Objectives of STREAM Teams:

3. Engage students in utilizing critical thinking skills in discerning cause & effect relationships between urbanization & stormwater runoff, pollutants, and land mass degradation.
4. Effect the community
 - Community projects
 - Community presentations

S.T.R.E.A.M. Teams

- Two Cohorts: Spring & Fall
- 4 Student Teams/ Each Cohort
- Each Team:
 - 6 Middle School Students
 - 1 College, or High School Intern
 - 2 Mentors
 - 1 Education Mentor
 - 1 Corporate Mentor
 - Or, 2 of one type (e.g. 2 Corporate/Team)

S.T.R.E.A.M. Teams

- Leader Interns (College, or High School)
 - \$500 Stipend
- Students
 - \$100 Stipend



Project Elements



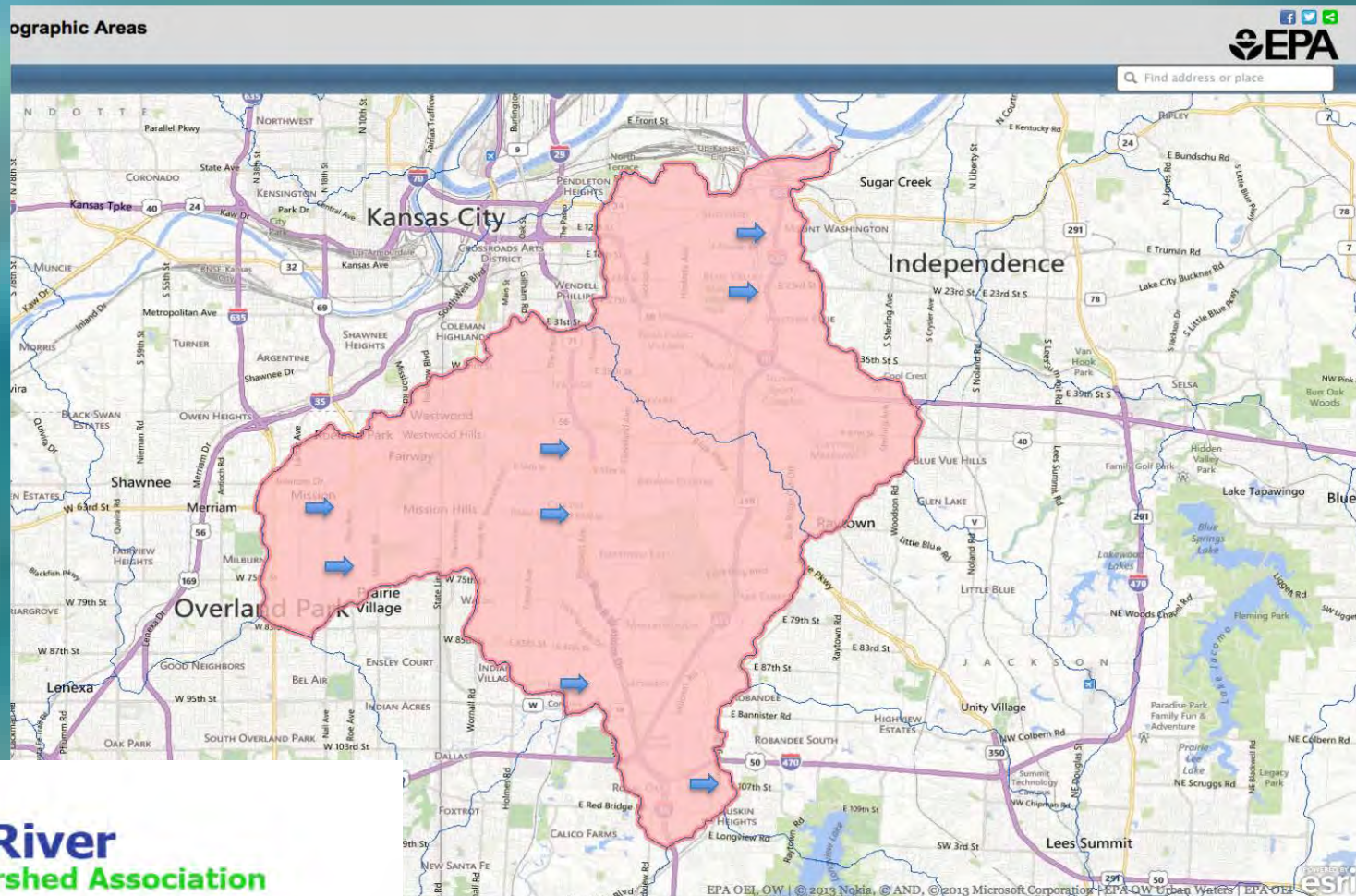
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S.T.R.E.A.M. Teams

14. Middle Blue River Basin, Kansas City, Missouri ~ Study Area for Blue River Watershed Association

■ Middle Blue River Basin: 6 Missouri Sites, 2 Kansas



Project Elements

- T.R.U.E. Blue program used as recruitment tool
- Orientation
- 4 Water Quality Testings
- Big Blue Bus Tour
- Community Project Planning
- Community Project conducted

Project Elements

- Community Presentation Training (HCA)
- Community Presentation
- *River Day* event on Country Club Plaza (Cohort One)
- Big Blue Bus Tour with Student Impact Stories (Cohort Two)
- Kansas City, Missouri City Council presentation (Cohort Two)
- Celebration Picnic ~ All Teams

Recruitment

T.R.U.E. Blue

(Teaching Rivers in an Urban Environment)



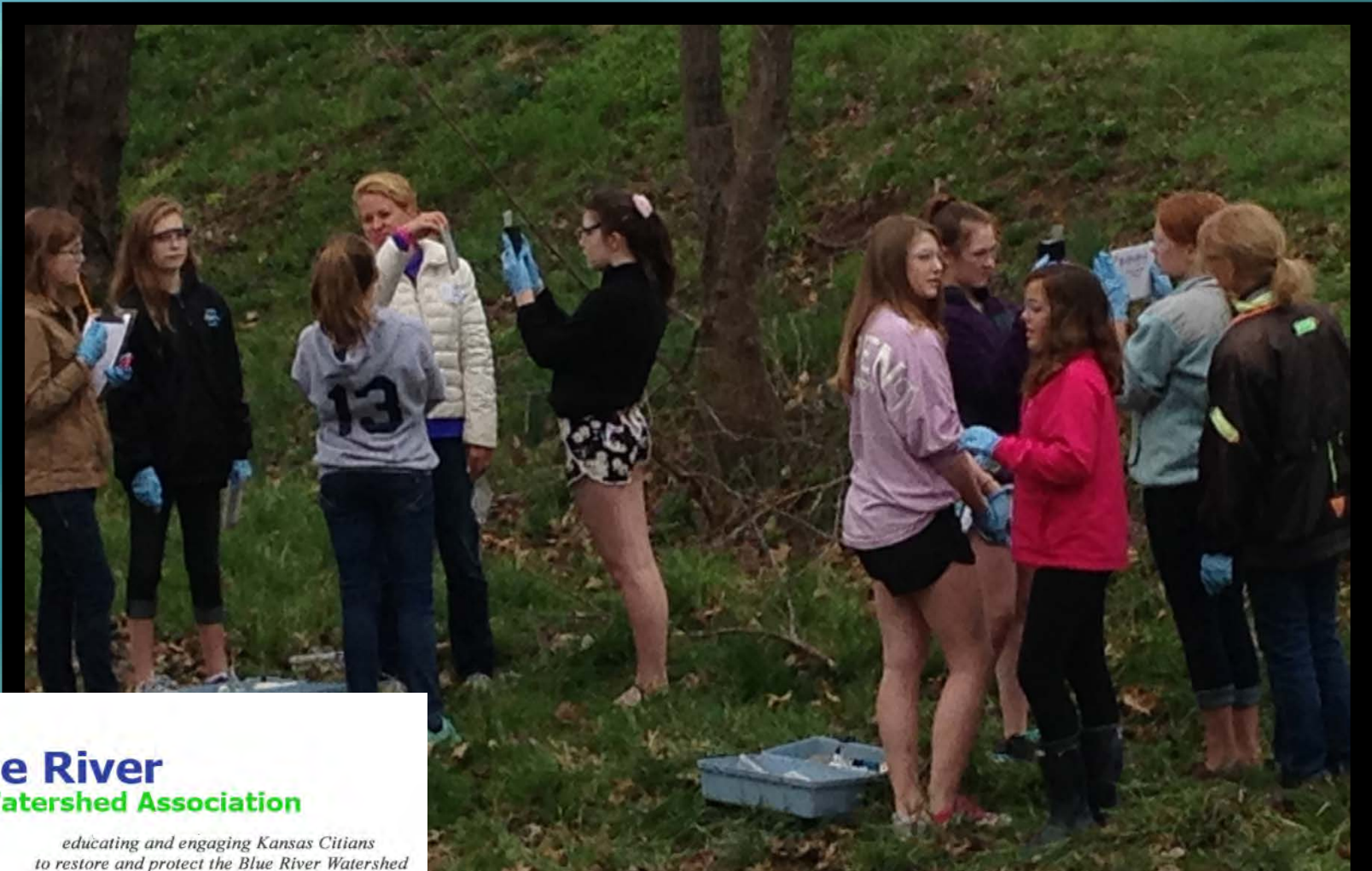
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Recruitment

T.R.U.E. Blue

(Teaching Rivers in an Urban Environment)



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Orientation



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Big Blue Bus Tour



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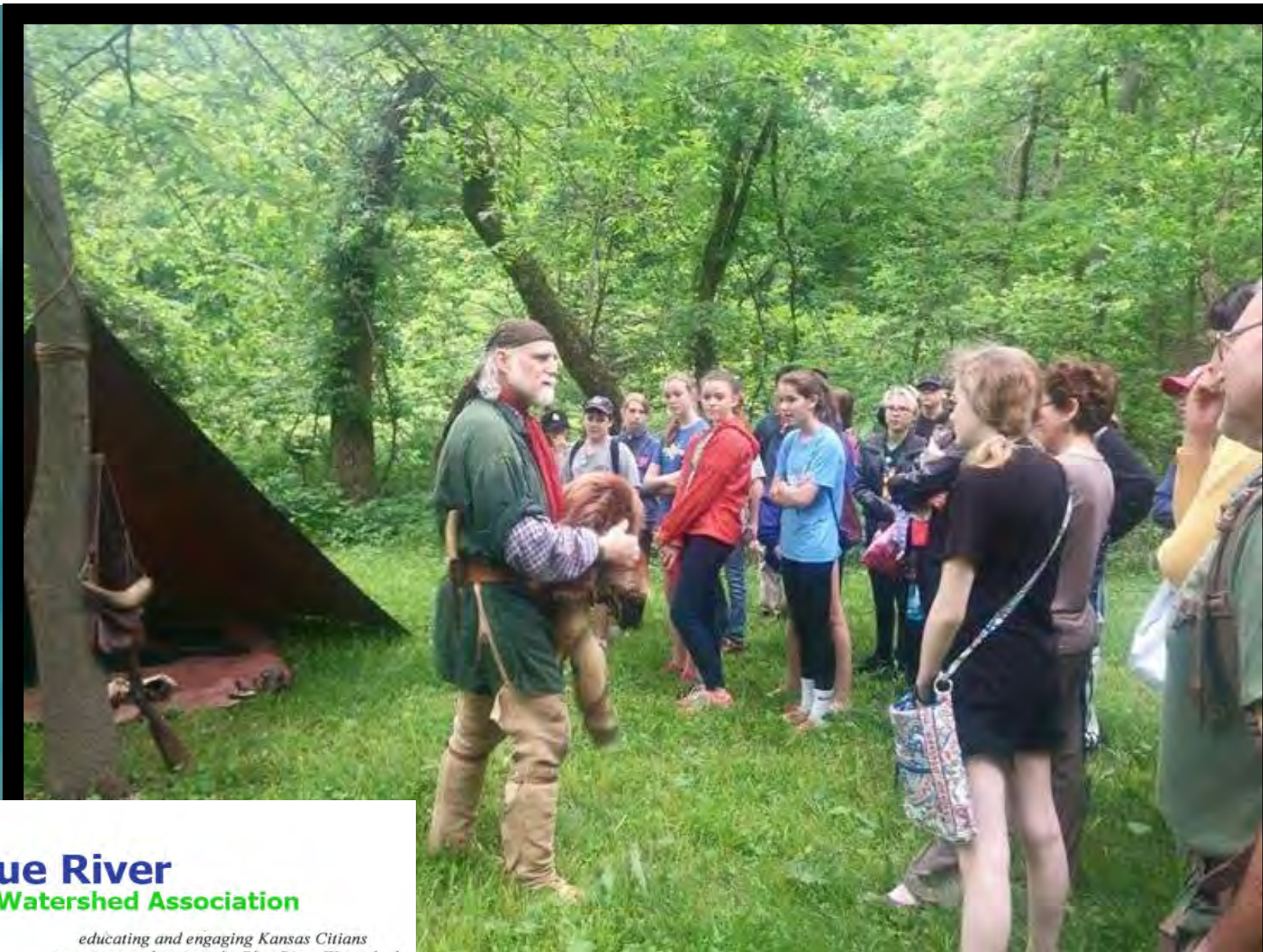
Big Blue Bus Tour



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Big Blue Bus Tour



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Student Impact

“Before I participated in this program, I barely thought of the importance of water, or our watershed. As a matter of fact, I didn’t even know what a watershed was. I’ve learned that we need to understand what we do to our water and need to be more aware of how pollution impacts our water system.”

~ Andrew
age 13

Water Testings



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Water Testings



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Water Testings



Water Testings



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Student Impact

“During the water testing, I realized just how much I actually use this water. It impacted me in a way that I want to help stop the river from being polluted.”

~ Eileen
age 13

Water Testings



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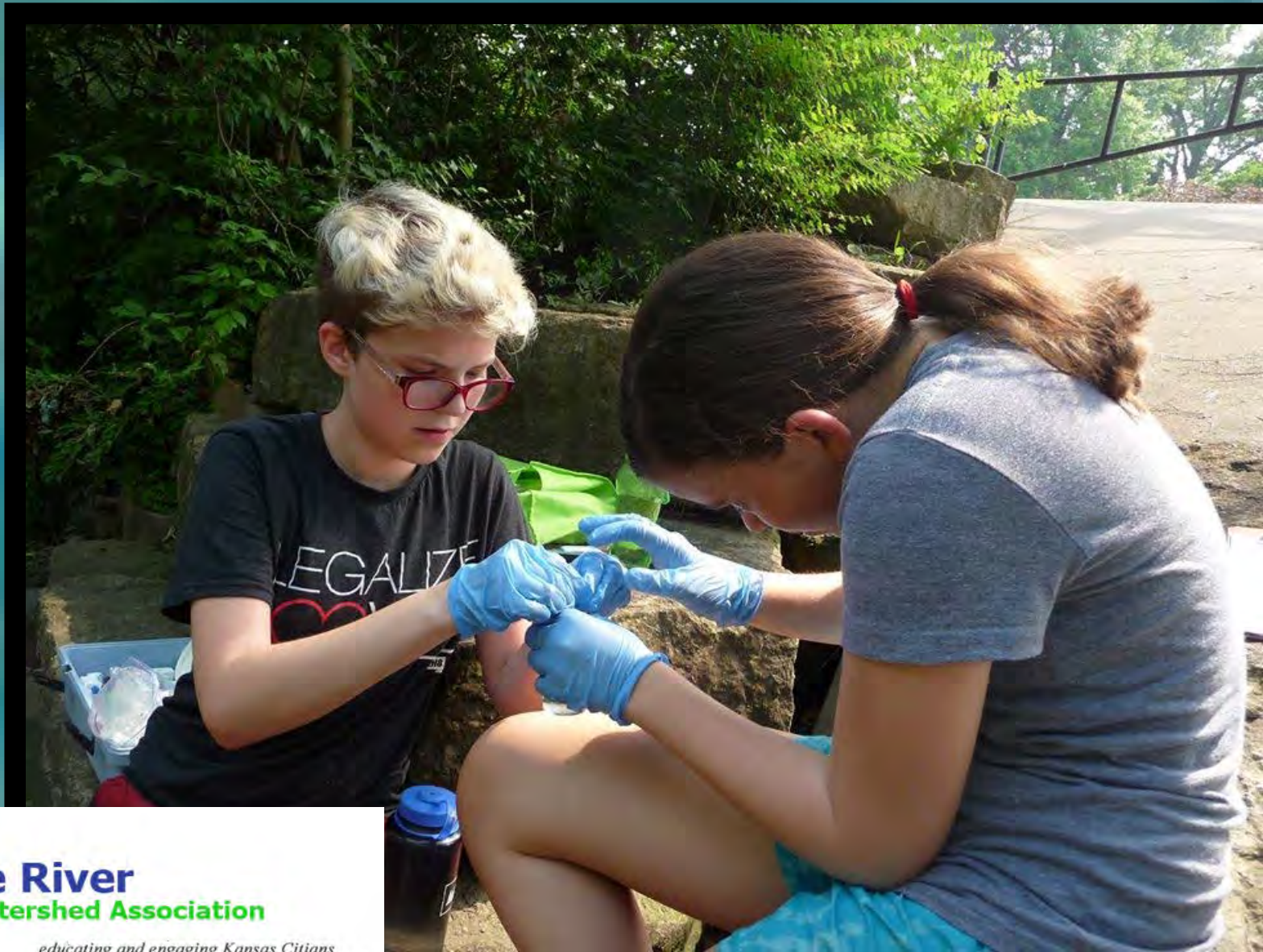
Water Testings



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Student Impact

“I never thought that I wanted to go to college, but if I have to go to college to do this - then I will.”

~ Brittany
age 13

Community Project Planning



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Community Project Planning



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Community Project Planning



Community Project Planning



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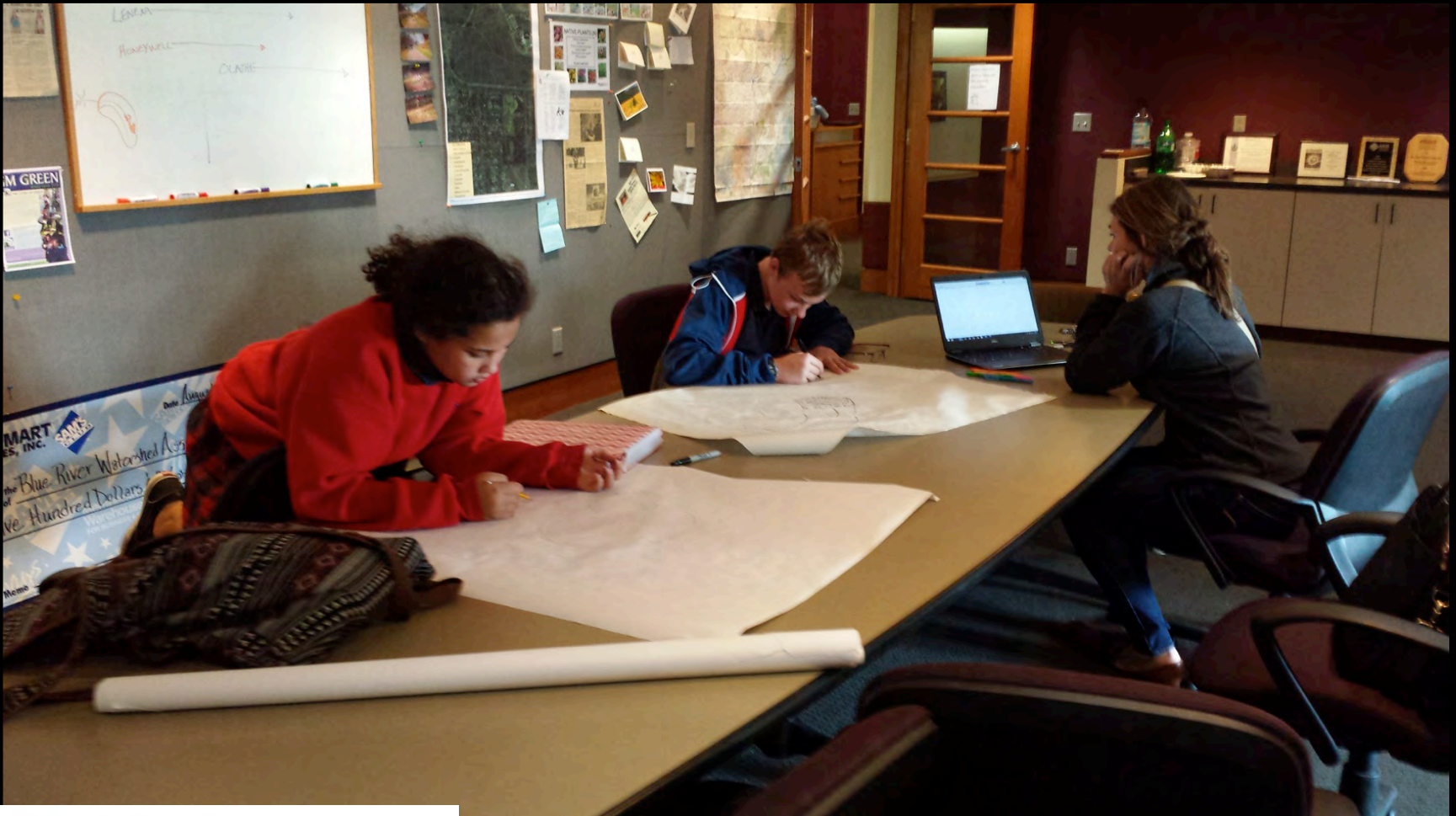
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Student Impact

“It has changed my perspective on how people can affect the environment in both positive and negative ways. This has inspired me to want to save the environment. I will teach what I learned and hopefully they will share with others.” ~ Isabella

age 14

Community Project



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Student Impact

“I had a great experience and learned many fascinating and important things that I will take with me throughout my life. I will always remember doing this. Thank you!”

~ Kathryn
age 13

Community Project

Remember the three R's:

- Reduce
- Reuse
- Recycle



Look for this symbol:



Blue River
Watershed Association
Urban Waters Grant
B.R.W.A.

*Trash can wraps designed by: Clarice, Luckee, Alessandra,
Lydia, and Paula*

Community Project

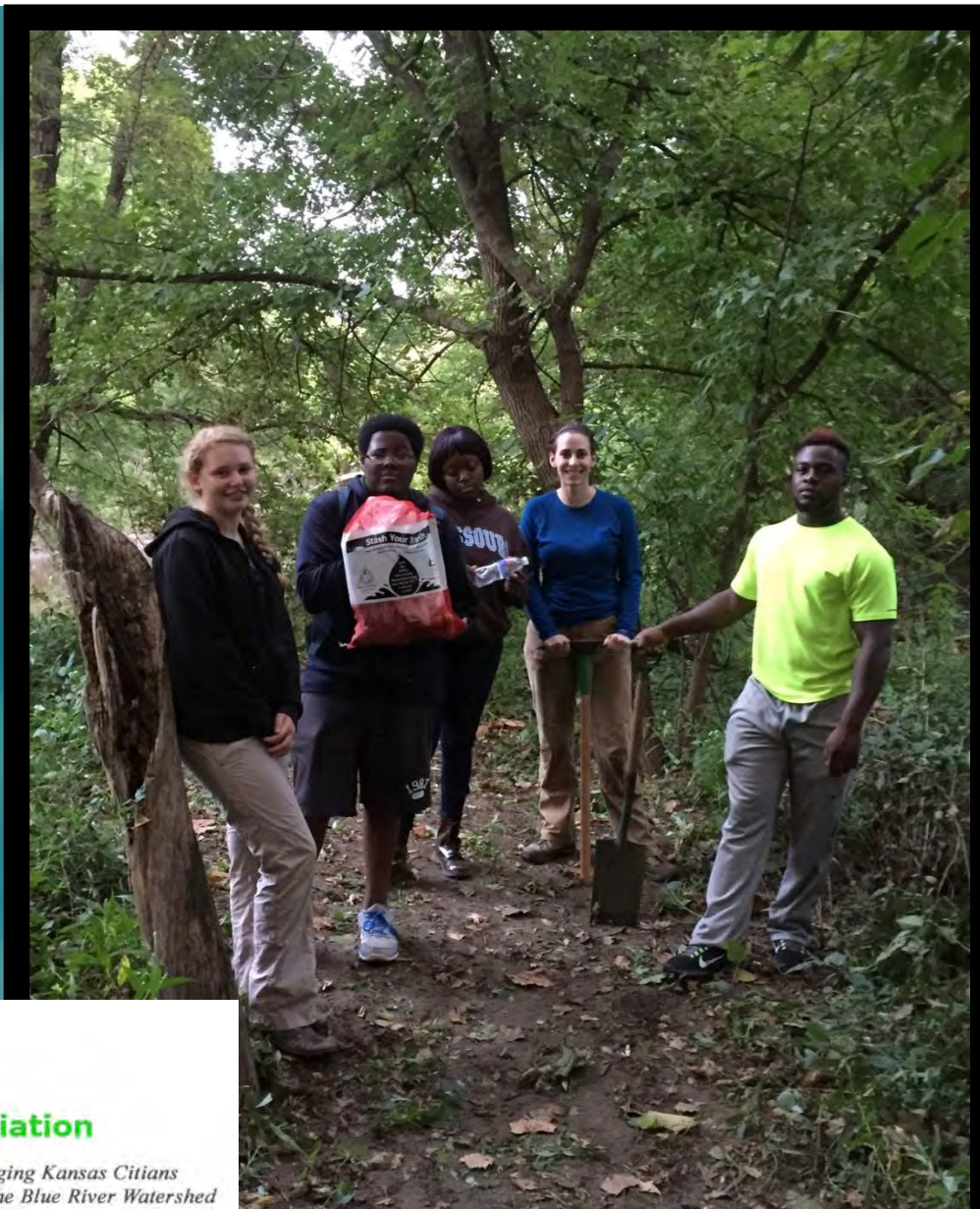


Student Impact

“The whole STREAM Team experience has truly impacted me. I will now do everything in my power to save our rivers, and help our environment. This whole experience was inspiring and will be something I will never forget. This project has changed me as a person for the better, and for that I am very grateful.”

~ Mattie
age 13

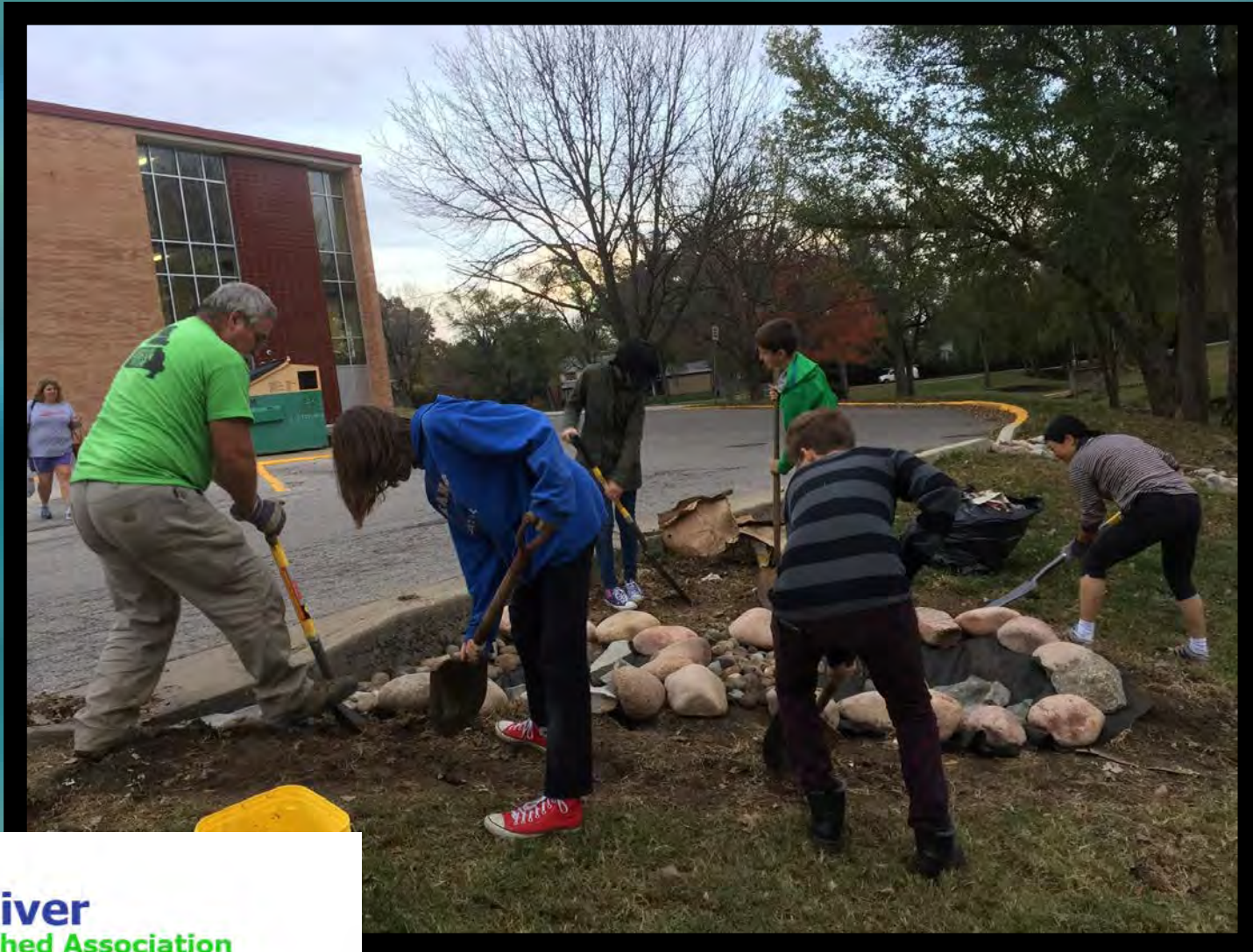
Community Project



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Community Project



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Presentation Training



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Presentation Training



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Community Presentation



Community Presentation



Community Presentation



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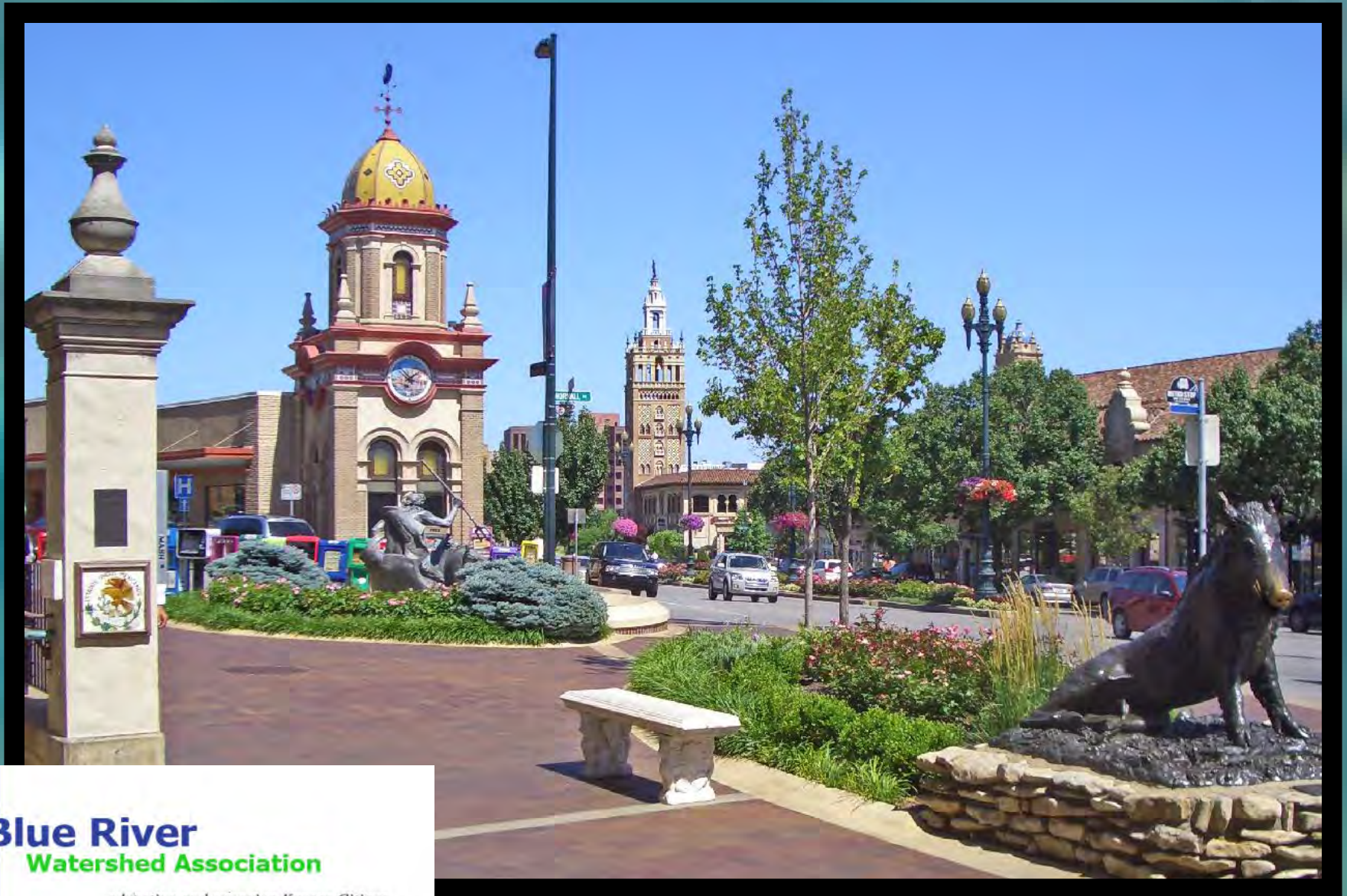
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Student Impact

“I have really learned a lot and it has been a life changing experience. I got to connect with more people and learn more about our community and environment.”

~ Claire
age 13

River Day, Country Club Plaza



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River Day, Country Club Plaza



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Student Impact

“If I were to say one thing about this entire project, it would be that it changes you. A lot. Thank you for this opportunity.”

~ Roan
age 13

BBBT ~ Student Impact Stories



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KCMO City Council Meeting



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KCMO City Council Meeting



KCMO City Council Meeting



S.T.R.E.A.M. Team Mentors



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Lessons Learned

1. Middle school students still finding their role in groups.
2. Some educators also want a stipend.
3. Asked a lot from corporate mentors – no time.



Positive Impact

1. For many students, this became a life-changing event.
2. Some mentors had never had such experiences, and are now considering BRWA board positions.
3. STREAM Teams has given BRWA broader exposure throughout the Metro Area.



Student Impact

“I learned how the trees, animals, and water are all interconnected and why our waterways need to be improved and preserved. The STREAM Team project was a meaningful experience for me...Thank you to all of the mentors, interns, and organizers who made this opportunity possible and allowed me to make a difference.”

~ Ceresa

age 14