

2016

Rivers Institute Strategic Plan

University of Dayton. Fitz Center for Leadership in Community

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THE RIVERS INSTITUTE

College of Arts and Sciences | Fitz Center for Leadership in Community





ABOUT US

Due to continued campus and community support, exceptional student leadership and the power of building a community around rivers, the Rivers Institute embarked on a new strategic planning process during the 2014-15 academic year with more than 30 participants. The result was a new vision, mission and long-term plan to 2020, which identified three main goals and many initiatives to help achieve each.

In 2005, students, faculty and staff began an initiative to improve and educate the community about the area's watershed. This initiative formalized and became the Rivers Institute in 2007. That year we developed our first vision, mission and strategic plan, as well as our River Stewards program, the flagship student aspect of the Rivers Institute. For almost 10 years, our stakeholders and many student leaders have collaborated to achieve the initial vision of **reuniting Dayton and its rivers**.

VISION

To inspire and educate leaders who empower communities to be stewards of their rivers.

MISSION

The University of Dayton Rivers Institute is a collaboration of students, faculty, staff and partners who engage in inter-disciplinary and experiential learning, civic engagement and sustainable community development around rivers. Our rivers are the strategic natural resource central to the communal, economic, aesthetic and ecological vitality of the Dayton region and beyond.

STRATEGIC GOALS

1

Develop best practices as a national model of a university-based and student-led rivers and watershed institute program that integrates a unique, interdisciplinary approach to watershed education through economic development, science, arts, sustainability, public policy and other fields.

2

Expand academic engagement in faculty and students through scholarship, professional development and experiential-based programs focused on rivers, watersheds and sustainability education.

3

Promote student leadership development and civic engagement as part of the University of Dayton's Marianist mission and charism, and foster community stewardship with a sense of global and social responsibility.





PROGRAMS

RIVER STEWARDS PROGRAM

The River Stewards' leadership and excitement continue to inspire the direction and creativity of the Rivers Institute. River Stewards is a three-year interdisciplinary program focused on leadership development and civic engagement around the region's greatest natural asset, our rivers and water resources. Students participate in weekly Friday minicourses, complete service learning requirements and collaborate to develop a capstone project their senior year. Interested students can apply to become a River Steward in the second semester of their freshman year. Currently there are more than 45 River Stewards within three cohorts. The River Stewards represent 25 different majors and all undergraduate academic units at the University of Dayton.



RIVERMOBILE AND COMMUNITY OUTREACH

Our RiverMobile is a mobile learning studio and a symbol of our focus on community and education outreach. The 53-foot tractor-trailer, which has been converted to a museum quality exhibit, travels to schools and communities throughout the Great Miami River Watershed. Five uniquely fabricated classrooms deliver an interactive learning opportunity that enables interdisciplinary exploration of our watershed. The RiverMobile is an exceptional example of a student-led project, from its idea phase through design, development and implementation. Currently, the RiverMobile is moving into a second phase, where students from the School of Engineering Innovation Center, in partnership with the Hanley Sustainability Institute, will examine and research the possibilities of a green-energy system.



PARTNERSHIPS

ANNUAL RIVER SUMMIT

The Ohio's Great Corridor Association (OGCA) Annual River Summit links cities, farmland, communities and individuals across our watershed to develop a regional strategy to leverage our most unique assets, the Great Miami and Mad rivers. Annually, more than 200 stakeholders come together to share projects, brainstorm ideas and learn from national keynote speakers to tap the potential our river corridors have for our region, economically, ecologically and socially. Past keynote speakers have included representatives from Trail Town, Pennsylvania; Chattanooga, Tennessee; Oklahoma City; Owensboro, Kentucky; and the Project for Public Spaces.



COMMUNITY AND CAMPUS PARTNERSHIPS

The Rivers Institute depends on the valuable time, talent and expertise of many people and organizations. Below is a list of community and campus partners who participated in the 2020 strategic planning process and who actively engage in developing the next generation of community and river leaders.

- Adventure Central
- City of Dayton Water Department
- Five Rivers Metroparks
- City of Troy
- SOCHE (Southwest Council for Higher Education)
- Dayton Public Schools/ DECA PREP
- UpDayton
- Bike Miami Valley
- Miami Conservancy District
- Ohio's Great Corridor Association
- Partners for the Environment
- University of Dayton Faculty (from biology, English, geology, engineering, physics, philosophy and political science)
- University of Dayton ArtsLIVE
- University of Dayton Hanley Sustainability Institute/SEE
- University of Dayton River Stewards

UNIVERSITY of



DAYTON

Fitz Center for
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