

2015 TEEA Winner Youth Category: Riley Sanders

Leland Butler, Project Contributor

The guy is sixteen years old, and he goes and he takes a job over like this, and we really made him the superintendent.

Jessica Wilson, City of Austin Watershed Protection Department

He didn't just stand back and tell people what to do, but he would show them how to plant the plants, how to use some of the tools. And he did a great job of explaining the importance of what they were doing and why they were doing it.

Riley Sanders, Eagle Scout

Water comes down from the whole parking lot, and it goes in our grade system and that goes into the garden and just irrigates all the plants. And from there, the roots of the plants and the good sand and dirt mix stops all the chemicals and oils that come from our automobiles and our cars kind of dead in its tracks before it gets down to the pipe system.

Robert Martinez, P.E., Riley's Project Mentor

He was very motivated by this project, and convinced that this is a good project. And this was for the schools and parents were going to be involved and kids were going to be involved.

Jessica Wilson

In picking this location, he's showing students at this school, teachers, but also just people that might be going down the sidewalk what they can do in their own yards.

Riley Sanders

What we're doing is we're really treating this water that was not being treated before, and preventing it from going into our storm system.

Leland Butler

When I was sixteen, I was reading Superman comic books behind my math workbook. I didn't even think that anything like this was done by young people like that.

Riley Sanders

We really wanted to get the whole community involved, we got the students and faculty, and then also our troop.

Jessica Wilson

The students were involved in creating the garden, so they came out and learned about it the whole way through. We also have lessons that he worked with some

of the teachers, so then they can come out and use the garden as an outdoor classroom. And he's involved younger scouts in the maintenance of it.

Robert Martinez, P.E.

It's about community involvement and improving the community.

Riley Sanders

That was the most rewarding for me, just seeing everyone working together toward a common goal.